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Defence

DOCTRINES OF
THE REVELATION
AND
AND SAVING LIGHT,
TO SOME REMARKS
MADE IN A WRITING ENTITLED
"THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS."

BY
S. HANCOCK, M. D.

SECOND EDITION.

LIVERPOOL;
GOSNOLD, SOUTH JOHN STREET.

LONDON;
TAYLOR AND HARRIS.

1833.

PRICE, 1s. 6d.



A

Defence

OF THE DOCTRINES OF

IMMEDIATE REVELATION

AND

UNIVERSAL AND SAVING LIGHT,

IN REPLY TO SOME REMARKS

CONTAINED IN A WORK, ENTITLED

"A BEACON TO THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS."

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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE present Edition contains some further remarks on each of the two main topics: see pages 49 and 74. It also contains, in the "Concluding Remarks" (page 90), a few observations ON THE CONNEXION BETWEEN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, AND ITS DOCTRINES. And, as some expressions in the first Edition appear to have been taken in a sense which the author did not intend, he has made a few verbal alterations.

A DEFENCE, &c.

REMARKS ON THE BEACON.

HAVING bestowed some attention on a work recently published, entitled "A Beacon to the Society of Friends," and being induced by several considerations to give my opinion of it, I have no other objection to do so, in as public a manner as the Society has thus been addressed, than a natural disinclination to controversy of every kind. The truth is, I have seldom found controversy profitable to my own mind, and therefore I have been ready to conclude that it is not likely to benefit others. There is, however, a time when even the lover of peace feels the necessity of having recourse to moral defence; and in this position I consider the Society of Friends is now placed by the appearance of the work in question. For, if I am not mistaken, there is an attack upon the fundamental principles of "the Society" in the "Beacon;" and to suffer such an attack to pass unnoticed from a quarter, in which age, and character, and station, must give it the greater weight, scarcely seems to be the duty of any one who has a firm belief in the truth of our testimonies, and a desire to see them more generally established. At the same time it would ill become me to call the

author's motives for publishing the "Beacon" in question, and I am ready to give him credit for entertaining a belief that his opinions are true.

It appears to me that the object of the author of the "Beacon" is two-fold : in the first place, to expose and refute the errors of Elias Hicks, lest they should produce some hurtful impression in this country, and lest others should fall into his delusions : and, in the second, to make this refutation of another man's errors a medium or vehicle for the dissemination of the author's own opinions. I shall take the liberty of commenting on each of these points.

As to the first, I have little to say ; for with the errors of Elias Hicks, I, as a member of the Society of Friends, have nothing to do. He was not a "Friend" in principle ; and, having been rightly disowned by the Society in America, his errors might well have been suffered to sleep with him in the grave. I think, therefore, that although there is, in the extracts from his sermons contained in the "Beacon," so much emptiness and absurdity, as make me wonder how he could have imposed his vain and vapid sentiments so extensively on others ; yet I hold it to be neither wise nor safe to scatter poison in this land, even though it might be accompanied by its antidote ; because weak and unstable minds are more likely to be misled and injured by the *bane*, than to be directed in the right path by the antidote, especially when this bane contains a mixture of what is good ; for, without some small amount of the latter, even Elias Hicks could never have drawn a multitude of followers after him. And, although I do not go so far as to admit that the "Beacon" contains a sufficient antidote to

the poison to which I allude, yet I believe that the errors of Elias Hicks and his followers would have found in this country few, if any minds, disposed to receive them; and that the sober-minded members of the Society generally, on this side of the Atlantic, are too firmly established on the right foundation, to manifest any tendency to fall off into that lamentable error, which has characterised the defection of Elias Hicks. My persuasion, on the contrary, is, that the great danger lies with some in this country going to the very opposite extreme, as I shall afterwards endeavour to show. I am, therefore, called upon to express my very great regret, that, for any ostensible cause, the unsound and incongruous opinions of Elias Hicks should ever have been thought so far worthy of a serious refutation, as to have been drawn from the obscurity to which they are even now hastening, and to which they will assuredly come ultimately, and committed to the press in this land,—for the press is polluted by such unscriptural opinions.

Hence, I could scarcely believe that a member of our religious Society, who has credit for so much religious zeal, love of truth, and exemplary conduct, as the author of the “Beacon,” would have been instrumental in reviving such opinions, had not an ulterior view presented itself: and this leads me to make some remarks on the second object, which, as above stated, I suppose to have been contemplated in the “Beacon.”

And here let me premise, that I have full charity for all men who differ from myself, conscientiously, on points of faith; neither do I feel myself, in a general way, called upon or qualified to correct

what I may deem the speculative errors of my neighbour; believing that pious and excellent men are to be found amongst all sects and denominations. But when a member of our own religious Society commits himself to the public, in the way in which I think this writer is committed, the case appears to me to be different: and therefore I lay claim to a brotherly freedom, which it might be wrong for me otherwise to use; and in the exercise of this freedom, I shall be very candid in expressing my sentiments.

I am, indeed, sorry, for his own sake, that a "Friend," for whom I have long entertained a sincere regard, should have chosen such a channel to give publicity to his opinions: for though every man has a full right to form his own opinions in religious matters, as well as to choose the medium by which he may wish them to be conveyed to the world, so far as this right is restricted to himself, yet I think it is incumbent upon all who either change their religious sentiments, or hold opinions different from those of the body with whom they are united in outward fellowship, to make them known candidly, openly, and without disguise. We cannot expect that all men, in the same community, will agree in sentiment on minor matters; but, in points of fundamental importance we have reason to look for a unity of faith, more especially from every one filling amongst us the station of a minister of the gospel.

I am not perhaps authorized to charge the author of the "Beacon" with a formal denial, in any part of it, of those fundamental doctrines which have been professed by the Society of Friends ever since it was established—I mean the doctrines of Immediate

Revelation and Universal and Saving Light. There appears to be considerable address in stating some of his propositions, *so warily*, as not positively to announce such a denial. But I have no hesitation in drawing an inference from his comments, in various places, unfavourable to the full and clear acknowledgment of these important doctrines. When I say that the doctrine of Immediate Revelation is thus indirectly assailed, I am aware that the author of the "Beacon" is fully disposed to admit, theoretically at least, the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit. But how it is possible to reconcile the incongruity, as I deem it to be, of believing in the latter, and not fully admitting the former, is more than I am able to explain : and I think it is one of the inconsistencies into which men are apt to fall when they leave the true foundation. For it is clear on the author's principles, that, if Immediate Revelation be granted, it must be *conditional* altogether ; that is, dependant on the outward knowledge of Scripture or on man's preaching, in short, that no Saving light is received or manifested but through one outward medium or the other. But this never was the received doctrine of the Society, and, I trust, never will be received.

I ground the inference which I have thus drawn on three things : first, on oblique insinuations against these doctrines ; secondly, on the quotation of some texts of Scripture in order to support a contrary opinion ; and thirdly, on his remarks respecting the state of the Heathen world, implying doubts on the subject.

Now, before I explain myself further on each of these points, one or two observations occur to me. I may therefore state, that it accords more with my plan

to throw out some general hints, on account of the comprehensive nature of the subject, than to enter into many particulars. At the same time I hope not to fall into the error of charging him in general terms with a departure from the acknowledged principles of "the Society," and failing to adduce any specific instance to prove it. This is neither my object, nor is it consistent with my notions of fair dealing. My business is chiefly, if not entirely, with the question, whether his opinions correspond with the avowed doctrines of "the Society." If it shall be proved that I have taken up a wrong impression on this important question, I shall not be sorry to have it removed; while truth compels me to say, that if his religious opinions *as a Quaker are sound*, and accordant with those of Penn, Fox, Barclay, Sewel, Tuke, Bates, Clarkson,* and many others, the expressions used in the "Beacon" appear to me singularly unhappy: and therefore until I am so corrected, I shall proceed upon the principle that I have *not* misapprehended these expressions.

I must here, however, admit, that several of the comments in the "Beacon," chiefly in regard to the inestimable value and inspiration of the Scriptures, meet my most cordial acceptance. Yet to me there appears to be in them such a mixture of what is undeniably true, with what is completely opposed to the doctrines contained in the Holy Scriptures, as they are viewed by the Society of Friends, as to lead me to an apprehension or fear, lest, in objecting to any

* Clarkson, though not a member of the Society, has given a full and clear digest of its principles, compiled from the best authorities.

inference drawn by the author, I should be accused of lightly esteeming the Scripture authority on which it is made to rest, or, in supporting what I consider a sound principle, I should be suspected of vindicating an unsound one. And, while I do not think it required of me to undertake the task of separating what in those comments is accordant with, from what is contrary to, *our principles*, because such an analysis would lead me into a sort of literary sharpness and contention that are uncongenial with my habits and feelings, I put it to the conviction of the author of the "Beacon," as an honest man, to determine the question in his own mind, *whether he is united in doctrine with us or not?*

I am willing to do the author justice in another point: and it is this; not to charge him with confounding the doctrine of a Holy Spirit with the abuse of it. Neither would I be understood myself to confound the pure influence of the Holy Spirit—which I have no objection to call the "light of Christ," notwithstanding what is so much insisted upon in these days as to "distinct offices" (a term altogether unscriptural)—with false or pretended illumination. I would not, I say, confound the language, and teaching, and guidance of this Holy light, with the delusions into which some simple-minded advocates of the doctrine have unhappily fallen, when they have mistaken "impressions" upon the tossed and restless mind, for the calm image of truth from the Sun of Righteousness himself, reflected upon, and revealed, in the placid bosom of his humble followers. But, if I am not mistaken, the comments in the "Beacon" lead to the conclusion, that this Divine influence so rarely leads its followers

right, *in the present day*, as that it is become an absolute nullity, or fallacious theory, in its practical application to the militant church of Christ; and that the rejection of the doctrine of an inward light, in order that the light of Scripture might be substituted in its place, would lead us all into order, and into a sounder practice than is found to characterize our present state! But surely, if this were a true position, and a right view of things, and if nothing of Divine influence, in the days of Fox and Penn—nothing, I say, but the light and knowledge of Scripture—had operated upon the minds of men, then, I believe, *our religious Society never would have had an existence*. For, they were taught immediately *by* Christ, and they directed all *to* Christ. They were sheep of the true fold, who not only knew their Master's voice, but could distinguish it from the voice of the stranger: and if some of them erred, as must be admitted, yet they stood firm in doctrine upon a rock, which never failed them when they were engaged in any arduous conflict in defence of their principles. Therefore, to reject the doctrine of an "inward light," because it is liable to abuse, would be to lower the standard of the gospel from what it was in former times, merely because men, in the present day, find it easier to attend to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, and to the words of the preacher, than to the voice of truth, which is the voice of Christ, in their own hearts. Hence, I cannot admit that the Scriptures, divine and excellent as they are, and blessed, I trust, as means auxiliary to salvation, to thousands and millions, are to be placed above the teaching of Christ's Holy Spirit by immediate revela-

tion ; because I dare not, as matter of principle, place the effect above the cause ; in other words, the letter above the spirit. For, however I might be disposed to agree that, in its practical application, the doctrine of spiritual influence is liable to great abuse, I am quite persuaded that the opposite doctrine, viz. that Scripture is the only rule we have to guide us, is liable to still greater abuse. And I cannot admit that mankind, universally, in this gospel day, are placed at greater disadvantage, with regard to an immediate access to the throne of grace, than were the Jews before the coming of the Messiah ; as would be the case, if any outward rule or means whatsoever, were to be set over that gift of divine grace, which, the apostle declares, “ bringeth salvation, and hath appeared unto all men, &c.” For “ as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation ; even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” (Rom. v. 18.) But the discussion of these things must be resumed in a more fit place.

I proceed to notice in order the three points before alluded to.*

1. In pages 8 and 9 of the “ Beacon,” I observe the words :—

“ The pernicious theory . . . that the revelation of the Spirit through the Scriptures is only a secondary rule ;” and “ it is clear to demonstration that there can be no higher rule than the Scriptures.”

Now, while I believe in the unanswerable soundness of Robert Barclay’s Propositions, that “ Inward im-

* In selecting passages from the “ Beacon,” I have been governed solely by a desire to collect the author’s religious sentiments, and to shew them by as brief quotations as possible, not, I can truly say, to give any unfair view, by garbled extracts.

mediate, objective revelation is the only sure, certain, and immoveable foundation of all Christian faith," and also, "that the principal rule of Christians under the gospel is not an outward letter, but an inward, spiritual law: therefore the letter of Scripture is not nor can be, the chief or principal rule of Christians."—I leave the author of the "Beacon" to draw his own inference as to my opinion of the doctrine conveyed in those words above quoted; for they seem to me to be diametrically opposed to the words of Barclay.

In page 37, the words,

"Those who account the (Scriptures, I conclude,) inferior as a rule to those *impressions* on their own minds, which they *believe* to be from the Holy Spirit,"

convey to my mind an idea, that the writer of them does not believe in any *impressions* which should serve, at present, as a guide to the humble and obedient followers of Jesus Christ; and, consequently, does not believe in the doctrine of the Society, which I believe to be the pure doctrine deducible from the Scriptures themselves, that, "because they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself; therefore they (the Scriptures) are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate primary rule of faith and manners."—*Barclay*.

In page 42, considerable stress is laid upon "the necessity of (Cornelius) having the outward knowledge of the gospel in order to his salvation:"

and in page 43, a conclusion is drawn

"that it is the *appointment* of Infinite wisdom, that by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, which we have in scripture (communicated either directly or remotely), mankind shall be brought to the knowledge of the truth."

Now, I am not at liberty to question the first; but

this I think is clear, in relation to Cornelius, that he, though a Gentile, was visited by an immediate divine revelation, *before* the gospel was outwardly preached to him by Peter; and that his prayers and his alms were had in remembrance in the sight of God; and that it was implied by Peter, that Cornelius was accepted with God. Acts x. 35. Therefore, the case of Cornelius speaks more against the assumption of the *necessity* above stated than for it. But in reference to the other quotation, I may briefly state that I dare not speculate or determine upon the *appointments* of Infinite Wisdom; nor should I think for a moment of limiting the free course of divine and Saving grace throughtout the world, to the outward knowledge of the Scriptures.

In page 62 of the "Beacon," the text, John xiv. 26,† is said by the author to

"have been wrested to prove that the Spirit, independently of his revelation by the Scriptures, would teach mankind all things needful for their salvation,"—and that "it relates to the apostles themselves."

But our Saviour himself declares, in John xvi. 8, "when he, (the Comforter) is come, he will reprove *the world* of sin, because they believe not in me;" shewing clearly that the Comforter would not only be with the good, but would strive with the sinner and the unbelieving, (it may be fairly inferred) *universally in the world*. And for what purpose would he strive if not for their inward conversion; thus teaching them, that, "denying ungodliness and worldly

† "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you."

lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world?" And this corresponds with the words of Barclay, that "the secret light which shines in the heart, and reprove unrighteousness, is the small beginning of the revelation of God's spirit, which was first sent into the world to reprove it of sin."

In page 77—

"Thus the Revelation in the Holy Scripture, as a medium to a knowledge of God, is set at nought and rejected, in order to make way for the delusive notion of 'the inward light.'"

On this passage I may observe, that whoever sets at nought and rejects the Holy Scripture, is, according to my judgment, so presumptuous and self-willed, as to demonstrate that he is not likely to obey the blessed illumination of divine light. And whether the remark respecting the "inward light," be meant seriously or ironically, no one could imagine that a true member of the Society of Friends wrote it, unless with the understanding that some meaning was attached to the words "inward light" which the sound members of the Society are not accustomed to; and therefore they could not see them brought into the least degree of contemptuous notice without serious regret.

In page 84—

"The work of conversion is indeed an inward work, effected by the power of the Holy Spirit in the heart; but what is the amount of evidence that this is ever done wholly without the instrumentality of the outward word, either immediately or indirectly applied?"

And again, page 85—

"Would it not be presumptuously to fly in the face of Divine Wisdom, for us to say that men are converted without the knowledge of the gospel by outward means?"

If these sentiments do not strike at the root of the

doctrine of the Universal and Saving Light of Christ, so far as matter of individual opinion can go, I know not what they mean. And, for my own part, believing as I do firmly in the inward redeeming power of Christ, as well as in the efficacy of his outward sacrifice, I should think it far more *presumptuous* in me to assert the contrary—that men were *not* converted without the knowledge of the gospel by outward means. If I were compelled to choose one of two dogmatical assertions, I should much prefer the former, viz. that men *are* converted without the knowledge of the gospel by outward means.

In pp. 88 to 92, an attempt is made to show that “the law written in the heart” is either a doctrine which *corresponds with that of the Deist* (see p. 88), or that it means “the same law which the Holy Spirit reveals by the Scripture,” by which periphrasis I understand the Scripture itself. Now I am bold to say, that the Society of Friends admit neither the one opinion nor the other, but maintain that the “law written in the heart” is “not an outward letter, but *an inward spiritual law, engraven in the heart, the law of the spirit of life, the word that is nigh, in the heart and in the mouth.*” Barclay, Prop. iii. 2. “The Scripture,” says Barclay, “declareth that the writing of the law in the heart, is a part, yea, and a great part too, of the new covenant dispensation, and so no consequence nor part of man’s nature.” Prop. iv. 2. Hence I do not agree with the author in his interpretation of the texts, Heb. viii. 10, and x. 16, and Jeremiah xxxi. 33, relative to this subject.

In page 109, it is said to be

“A dangerous error, that the *inward light* is the primary rule of faith and practice.

And in page 151—

"The pride of being wise above that which is written, setting up a '*light within*' above the revelation of God by holy Scripture, has led, step by step, into the deadly gulf of Deism."

Unless the words "inward light" involve a double meaning, and represent one thing to the author of the "Beacon," and another to myself, viz. the light of the natural understanding, and the light of Christ revealed in the heart, we are at issue on this point. If the first meaning be taken, I agree with him; if the second be the fair and usual interpretation of the words "inward light," as received by our Society, I differ from him entirely; and it is clear, according to his views, that Robert Barclay must have done great mischief by the declaration that "God hath communicated and given unto every man a measure of the light of his own Son." Prop. v., vi., and x. And again; "by this inward light many of the heathen philosophers were sensible of the loss received by Adam, though they knew not the outward history." Ib. xxvii.

In pages 118 and 119, an attempt is made to explain away the general meaning of the passage, 1 Cor. xii. 7, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit *withal*," by confining its application to the Corinthians, and also to prove

"That no such doctrine was here intended, as that a portion of the Spirit is given to every rational creature."

Whether the apostle designed that the passage in question should be so limited, I will not pretend to say; but the doctrine of our Society is distinctly, that "the grace of God hath appeared to all men." And I cannot distinguish the gift of grace from "the manifestation of the Spirit given to every man to profit *withal*." I wish not to dispute about words,

when we can have clear ideas of *things*. It is well known to the author himself, whether this passage does not afford him *another* occasion, for covertly calling in question the doctrine of Universal and Saving Light.

2. I come now to the second point on which I ground my inference, as before stated, viz. the quotation of some texts of Scripture, in order to support an opinion, contrary, as I think, to the doctrines of Immediate Revelation and Universal and Saving Light. And it is proper for me to include under this head the consideration of the author's avowed opinion of the paramount authority of Scripture, paramount, I mean, to that of the light of Christ in the soul. And here let me observe, that I speak of a great principle, not of its abuse. I maintain that, in this gospel day, there not only may be, but there is, such a revelation, and that, as it is from Christ himself, it cannot be made *subordinate* to Scripture, though it can never contradict the sound and comprehensive and impartial interpretation of Holy Scripture. In general terms I may remark, that many of the texts of Scripture so quoted appear to me to be misapplied; that some of them seem to be given partially, and to be used by the author of the "*Beacon*," (I will not say insidiously, but indirectly) not so much to refute the errors of Elias Hicks, as to support his own views against the received doctrines of the Society of Friends. I appeal to himself if this be not the case. I cannot suppose him to be ignorant of the received doctrines of our Society. But I hope he will never propose to himself such an unattainable object, as that of convincing the serious, weighty, and reflecting members of the Society, that they do not know their own doctrines, or that

Scripture is against them; and that, for nearly two hundred years, they have been supporting a weak and brittle testimony, with the loss of life, and of liberty, and of property, in favour of principles which are now found to be delusive and "pernicious errors!"

The principles of the Society are well known; and though some have been ready, in every age since it was established, to slide from the foundation, those who are unstable in the present day, whether few or many, will never shake the foundation itself; for the principles we profess are built upon the unchangeable and eternal truth of God. We have not now to *unlearn* the catechism of our faith—to *put out* Immediate Revelation with Universal and Saving Light, and our spiritual views of religion, worship, and the ministry; and to substitute in their place a belief in the superior efficacy of any thing which is outward; because some, under our name, are turning the eye of the mind outward instead of inward, and after beginning in the Spirit, are going back to the letter, thus leaving the fountain of life itself, "and hewing out to themselves broken cisterns that will hold no water."

Any one who reverently views the gifts of God, whether the "unspeakable gift" of grace, or that inestimable treasure "which is able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus"—the Scriptures of truth—must feel reluctant to institute any curious inquiry by way of comparison between things so holy. A pious mind receives with thankfulness every gift of divine goodness, and seeks to profit by it. For, every additional gift is an additional talent, for the use or abuse of which we must be accountable.

I prove my own opinion of the Holy Scriptures by the acknowledgment, as well as the fact, that I endeavour to support every one of my religious principles by their authority, and that I consider every opinion which has not their support must fall to the ground. Yet I well know that Scripture may be quoted against Scripture, and that some persons, according to their established religious views, understand passages of the Scriptures in one sense, and some in another. Hence, *expounding the Scriptures* often means, *defending our own tenets*, whatsoever these may be. But, blessed are they who, with humility of soul, pray for the key of David to open unto them those mysteries, which continue to be hid from the wise and prudent, and to be revealed unto babes, notwithstanding the outward letter which veils these mysteries, is visible to the outward eye, and diligently searched by the carnal mind! The prince of darkness could quote Scripture, to give effect to his temptations; but his subtle device was overcome by a weapon from the same armoury, aimed by the great Captain of Salvation himself. What higher testimony could there be to the authority of these sacred records? What more signal proof of the perverted use to which they might be turned? The Jews had the Scriptures; yet they rejected Him of whom they testified: and “unstable and unlearned men,” we are told, “wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction.” What do these things prove, but that the most sacred gifts may be abused? Hence, we are led to the conclusion, that the state of mind in which these gifts are received, causes the difference between their turning to edification or the contrary. If they are only reasoned upon by the understanding, instead of being applied savingly to the

heart and its corruptions, we know what will be the effect. The head will be filled with dogmas, and the heart will still be full of impurity. And although those dogmas might in themselves be truths of the highest moment, they would have no more practical effect on life and conduct, in such a speculative state of mind, than the principles of any natural science. We know this to be the case, from a view of the conduct of many high Christian professors. And the inference is, that we may possess the Holy Scriptures, and labour to understand the truths contained in them, and yet we may not be saved by them. "Ye search," or "search ye the Scriptures," said our Holy Redeemer to the Jews; "for in them *ye think* ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me: *and ye will not come to me that ye may have life;*" clearly contrasting the efficacy of the Scriptures with his own power, and implying that he could give them, if they came to Him, *that* which they *thought* (erroneously we cannot doubt) they could obtain by searching the Scriptures, when their minds were turned from HIM, "the way, the truth, and the life."

Now, after what has been said, it is quite impossible, upon our principles, to admit, that this Universal and Saving Light, "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," of the apostle John,—this "kingdom of God within," and "talent" set forth in the parables of our blessed Saviour,—this grace, or "free gift," that "bringeth salvation and hath appeared unto all men" of the apostle Paul,—this "engrafted word" of the apostle James,—this "incorruptible seed," of the apostle Peter,—this "law written in the heart" of Jeremiah and the writer to the Hebrews, can be held

subordinate in efficiency and power to the outward letter of Scripture, justly esteemed *Holy* as it is, yet limited to a comparatively small portion of the human family, not only for thousands of years past, but at the present time unknown to millions of our fellow-creatures. What is held to be universally extensive must needs be accounted of primary importance to that which is far less so; and a "present witness" against evil, of greater authority than an outward testimony. We must grant, indeed, that this "light" is often enveloped as it were in thick darkness, this "seed" is buried low and greatly oppressed, this "talent" is despised and hidden in the earth, this "engrafted word" is disobeyed; and thus it partakes in some degree of that lot or accident to which the Scriptures themselves are subjected. For it is only when the Lord is pleased, by his Holy Spirit, to visit the hearts of his children, as "with the day-spring from on high," that they can be quickened and animated to receive with saving effect, either the immediate influence of his Divine light, or the glad tidings of Gospel truth, from his anointed ministers or the inspired writings. We admit with sorrow, that millions of our fellow-creatures are benighted, sunk, depraved; but we cannot admit that God has left himself "without a witness." We are all the children of Adam: and as Christ died for all, we can exclude none from the operation and effects of his Saving grace. Why the Almighty has permitted that his grace and good Spirit should be so trampled upon and resisted in the earth, we cannot explain. In the same way, in our own country, by many, the Scriptures of truth are neglected and despised, even by some who do not deny their divine origin. These are lamentable proofs of man's

gross moral insensibility and alienation from the life of God, even when the gospel is preached in his ears, and the Scriptures are expounded to his understanding. Yet we know not how soon this spark of divine life may be kindled into sensible emotion — this light may dawn amidst the surrounding darkness — this least of all seeds may be raised into power, so as to enable the soul to receive and embrace with gladness the various outward helps, which God in his infinite mercy is pleased to provide for the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world. There is, however, I am persuaded, *Something* in the heart of man, with all his darkness, with all the opposition and obstruction of his fallen nature, and with all his sinful propensities, — *Something*, I say, the state of which in the human soul, we cannot better understand than by the similes employed in Holy Writ to represent it; which is wonderfully prepared to unite with the full discovery of gospel truth, wherever and among whatever people it can be made, under right influence and authority; proving to my mind, that the gospel dispensation, in its pure and simple character, is a system divinely adapted to change, sweeten, and exalt our nature, adapted as a remedy for every ill, and a supply for every want, with beautiful fitness to our natural and moral constitution; and that, if there were not this seed, or gift, or talent, placed within us, the discovery of divine truth never could be made congenial to us, because there would be nothing by which it could be received, and to which it could be assimilated. And, by this simple analogy, which is unfolded in Scripture by parables and illustrations of various kinds, representing the same thing, many difficulties are explained,

that cannot I think be understood upon any other principle, as I shall afterwards attempt to shew.

3. After what I have said on the two first points, which include many of the observations belonging to the present, it only remains for me, in reference to it, to direct the attention of my reader to the doubts intimated in pages 73—75 and 84—86 of the “Beacon,” respecting the state of those who have not the outward knowledge of Christ. The arguments of a writer, so clear, cogent, and comprehensive, as Robert Barclay, might at least have been referred to, and some attempt made to set them aside, by one filling the station of a minister in our Society, who questioned the doctrine of Universal and Saving Light, before he ventured to doubt of the possibility of such being saved,—which is what I understand from his comments.

R. B. says fully and satisfactorily, “For we affirm, that as all men partake of the fruit of Adam’s fall”... ..“so also many may come to feel the influence of this holy and divine seed and light, and be turned from evil to good by it, *though they know nothing of Christ’s coming in the flesh*, through whose obedience and sufferings it is purchased unto them.” Prop. v. and vi. § 14. And again, § 28, “This is that universal evangelical principle, in and by which this salvation of Christ is exhibited to all men, both Jew and Gentile, Scythian and Barbarian, of whatsoever country or kindred he be.”..... And this is his argument. “In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted : but many of the heathens feared God, and wrought righteousness : therefore they were accepted.” § 26.

R. B. proceeds, “So as we see, that it is not the

having the outward knowledge that doth save, without the inward; so neither doth the want of it, to such to whom God hath made it impossible, who have the inward, bring condemnation. And many that have wanted the outward, have had a knowledge of this inwardly, by virtue of that inward grace and light given to every man, working in them, by which they forsook iniquity and became just and holy, as before proved; who, though they knew not the history of Adam's fall, yet were sensible in themselves of the loss that came by it, feeling their inclinations to sin, and the body of sin in them: and though they knew not the coming of Christ, yet were sensible of that inward power and salvation, which came by him, even before as well as since his appearance in the flesh." Prop. v. and vi. § 26.

"So we see how, that it is the inward work, and not the outward history and Scripture, that gives the true knowledge." § 27.

Now I have two reasons for quoting the authority of Robert Barclay. First, because I believe that his arguments remain not only unrefuted, but unanswerable. And when I state that it is not my disposition to put implicit faith in the authority of any man, I may perhaps have some credit for independence of judgment. Therefore, neither the opinion of Robert Barclay, nor that of any other man, would weigh with me, if I did not consider that it was founded on a correct and enlarged view of Scripture doctrine.

Secondly, I quote the apology of Robert Barclay, concluding that one who is now a Minister, in outward fellowship in the same Society with myself, can hardly be supposed to have thrown off the authority of a

work so justly esteemed as it is amongst us; for this would imply that his departure from the ground of our testimonies was greater than I am yet willing to believe it to be.

It may be interesting to some of my readers to see what the truly enlightened poet Cowper thought upon this subject: and it would be easy to produce other testimonies from illustrious men in support of our views.

“ Is virtue then, unless of Christian growth,
 Mere fallacy, or foolishness, or both?
*Ten thousand sages lost in endless woe,
 For ignorance of what they could not know?*
 That speech betrays at once a bigot's tongue;
 Charge not a God with such outrageous wrong.
 Truly not I: *the partial light men have,
 My creed persuades me, well employed, may save;*
 While he that scorns the noon-day beam, perverse,
 Shall find the blessing unimproved, a curse.
 Let Heathen worthies, whose exalted mind
 Left sensuality and dross behind,
 Possess for me their undisputed lot,
 And take unenvied the reward they sought.
 But still, in virtue of a Saviour's plea,
 Not blind by choice, but destined not to see.
 Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame
 Celestial, *though they knew not whence it came,
 Derived from the same source of light and grace,
 That guides the Christian in his swifter race;*
 Their judge was conscience, and her rule their law:
 That rule, pursued with reverence, and with awe,
 Led them, however faltering, faint, and slow,
 From what they knew, to what they wished to know.”

COWPER'S POEMS. (*Truth.*)

ON MYSTICISM, QUIETISM, AND A RELIGION OF FEELINGS.

Before I proceed to some general observations on the great doctrines in question, it seems to be not unsuitable to notice the remarks contained in the "Beacon" respecting "*Mysticism*," and "*Quietism*," and a "*Religion of feelings*."

They are all, as I conceive, terms, which an enemy might be supposed to use, for the purpose of undermining the peculiar doctrines of our Society. Each of them is a phrase calculated to give a disparaging view of a great and holy principle. They appear to be laid as traps to catch the feet of the unwary, who, not believing or concerning themselves in "the *Mystery of Godliness*," and not experiencing that prostration of soul which *Silent worship* demands, nor seeking the guidance of the invisible Shepherd, imagine, that what is obscure to the natural mind is fanciful; that silence before the Lord is only an affectation of high spiritual communion, and therefore without any profit; and that the secret direction of an inward guide and teacher is sought for in vain, while the outward letter of Holy Scripture is accessible to them. I am led to fear that these terms will entrap some of our members, who have a loose hold of our testimonies, and are little attached to their own principles. But I can scarcely believe that the sound and firm and weighty members

of Christ's true church amongst us, will any one of them be entangled in the snare.

I will first give an explanation of the terms, as they appear to me to be viewed by those who look at our principles in a false light, through a distorted medium; and then I will endeavour to show the true principle, which each, according to my own interpretation, ought to represent, if it were viewed without any prejudice.

The word *Mysticism* is, I conclude, intended to mean, that a disposition is prevalent in the Society, to indulge in cloudy and unprofitable musings and fanciful exercises, regarding some principles of Christian faith, which are discovered to be imaginary, though supposed by the Society to be real!

Quietism, we are to understand, as an indolent and vacant state of the mind, which is rather encouraged than counteracted by the habits of silent worship, and which lulls to sleep those energies that ought to be actively employed in furthering the work of grace—a reliance, in fact, upon abstracted stillness to accomplish the work of salvation!

A Religion of feelings, means a sentimental religion, which, casting aside the great doctrine of the efficacy of every thing that has been, and can be, done *without us*, leads the mind to trust in its own reveries, as the only requisite means of sanctification and redemption, and in its own feelings, as the sufficient guide and test of right direction as well as of spiritual discernment;—hearing a voice which is not uttered, looking for intimations that are never afforded, supposing the impulse of heated emotion to be that of a divine commission, and suffering reason to be laid

prostrate under the anarchy of a distempered sensibility !

I do not fear to state, thus broadly and plainly, what I suppose to be the views of some, in their use of the words in question, believing that we can show them the real difference, between our genuine principles, and the deformed representations embodied in the terms above defined, which they have allowed themselves to imagine to belong to the faith and practice of the Society. For if, unhappily, a faith and practice, characterised by such unsoundness, should have attached themselves in any instance to our system, so as to have grown upon it, like a diseased excrescence upon a constitution otherwise healthy, it is full time that the knife should be applied to get rid of the mischief, that we may not suffer the burden and the risk any longer. It is full time that we should have a clear conception of our danger: and be enabled to distinguish between our principles and their abuse. And, under this view, the attempt that is now made to bring the Society into disrepute, may prove a wholesome warning, and may lead to good, instead of turning to evil. It will therefore be well for every one, to consider how far he or she, individually, affords any occasion to the "accuser of the brethren," for casting reproach upon those testimonies, that have been purchased for us at so high a cost.

Let us now take a view of those realities, which the Society is willing to acknowledge and to support, in place of the fantastic substitutes, severally noticed, with which our true testimonies are so greatly calumniated and so unjustly confounded.

For *Mysticism* let us substitute that humble and

reverent disposition of mind, which receives the *mysteries* appertaining to the heavenly kingdom, as they are revealed in the Holy Scriptures, in the simplicity of faith and not in the arrogance of human reason. In this disposition the prayer of thanksgiving uttered by our blessed Saviour in allusion to these *mysteries*, may be brought with deep instruction before the mind, because it shews the acceptable and approved state in which divine truths are communicated, when he said: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast *hid* these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes." Matt. xi. 37.

In this disposition, also, we are led to admit in its full acceptance, and in all its parts, the doctrine of the apostle, conveyed to Timothy, that "great is the mystery of Godliness." 1 Tim. iii. 16.

It is a mystery beyond our comprehension, how the heart of the true Christian may become the temple of the Holy Ghost. And it is a glorious mystery that whosoever is "in Christ is a new creature;" and that "God would dwell in them," 2 Cor. vi. 16; and "Christ would dwell in their hearts," Eph. iii. 17; and "the Spirit of God would dwell in them," Rom. viii. 9.

It is a great mystery that the soul, in its "quickened" state, has its spiritual senses and understanding, by which it "sees," and "hears," and "tastes," and "feels," and "discerns," in a manner of which man in the unregenerate state is wholly incapable.

All these are mysteries which we are willing to receive though unable to comprehend; and there are many more in the gospel, which can only be discerned

spiritually. Hence they must be accounted "foolishness" by all, who imagine that every thing in the great plan of redemption, can be made obvious to the carnal mind.

Upon principles like these, the practice of the Society is founded; and, if I am not mistaken, the practical application of the doctrines we profess, is not marked by a single character that belongs to those who are under some enthusiastic delusion: but, in conduct, the Society speaks the language of "truth and soberness" to the world, in every relation in which its members stand to the community, either as neighbours, kindred, fellow-citizens, or fellow-men.

According to my apprehension, the religion of the Society of Friends, leads them to take a calm and collected view of things; and I do not know any people who are less deserving of the character of "*mystics*," or more sensitive in detecting real *mysticism*, in all its parts and disguises. From their education, their discipline, and their early habits of reflection, they are not a people to admit of any mysteries but what the Almighty, in his wisdom, has sealed up from the prying curiosity of man, or been willing in his mercy to reveal to the faithful few, who follow their holy leader in meekness, and simplicity, and perfect devotedness of heart.

But, at the same time, we are not ignorant that there is a "great mystery of iniquity," which is ever at work against the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ, though veiling itself under the specious shew of exalting this pure kingdom: and happy are they who do not lend themselves, in any way, as unconscious instruments in promoting the secret designs of

the author of this unholy *mystery*, to confirm his kingdom of darkness! Happy are they, who are not deceiving their own hearts in taking a false view of things; but are able to see the mystery of *each kingdom*, revealed before them in the light of truth! The day is not yet passed when the peaceful followers of the Lamb have to contend against "spiritual wickedness in high places."

The testimony in favour of *Silent waiting upon God*, whether in private retirement or in public worship, is that which I would contrast with the term *Quietism*. The religious duty of meeting together in public, even in solemn silence to worship God, was one for the performance of which our early friends suffered perhaps more extensively than for any other testimony. Their assemblies in the face of the world brought them into visible contact with their persecutors, and thus afforded occasion for collecting and apprehending those multitudes of innocent people, who were often tried and condemned on other grounds of faith, as for not swearing, &c. Neither the adverse elements, nor the rage of their enemies, manifested in stonings, and revilings, and imprisonments of their friends, could subdue the unconquerable firmness of aged men, and feeble women, and even of tender youths, in meeting together in cold, and hunger, and fatigue, and tempest, for the solemn purpose of worshipping their Maker.

True silence before the Lord is that prostrate state of the soul, in which pride is cast down, and the high look is laid low, and every thought of the heart is brought into the obedience of Christ, that the Lord alone may be exalted. It is a state of reverent devo-

tion, of humble waiting, and of deep self-abasement. It does not enter the courts of the Divine Majesty with self-confidence, but in humility and fear; because it has every thing to ask, and nothing to render, in this gospel day, but the sacrifice of a broken heart, or the tribute of praise for unmerited blessings, or the dedication of heart, and mind, and strength, as a whole burnt-offering, to the Lord's service. In every pompous appendage of Christian worship, it sees the pride and self-exaltation of man, and not the true homage to the glory of the invisible God. Hence it discovers nothing but the littleness and vanity of the creature, and the Majesty of the Creator,—the burden of sin, and the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ,—the guilt incurred by innumerable offences, and the unbounded mercy of God in Christ Jesus,—the helplessness of man, and the sufficiency of his Redeemer,—the want of many Christian graces, and the need of faith in the sure promises of a covenant-keeping God, that what is needful will be supplied.

Hence, it is clear, that *silent waiting before the Lord*, in a right disposition of mind, is no mockery,—it is no state of indolence. Some it leads to examine; some, to condemn; some, to prove themselves. In others, it excites a warm and fervent zeal, which can only preserve its flame alive by fire from the Lord's holy altar. It differs essentially from that state of warm emotion to which ordinary meditations of the heart might give rise, in that it is quite unable to kindle its own flame, or, by any power of man's will, to raise the "life of God" into dominion in the soul. Man, therefore, is compelled to wait for the renewed ability to worship the God of the spirits of all flesh in spirit

and in truth : for he cannot command the light of the Lord's countenance to shine, nor his blessing to descend, nor the right spirit to be renewed. He must therefore patiently wait for the Lord's time ; and must supplicate in secret for help in adversity, for patience in tribulation, for fortitude in trial, for the purification of the heart from secret faults, for the subjugation of the untoward will, for deliverance from evil, for charity towards all men, and for an increase of love to God.

Is there nothing, then, for the poor quickened soul to do, when in a state of reverent silence before God ? Is it a fable that the Lord "will give power to them that have no might," and that, while the young and strong may faint, "*they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, shall mount upwards as on the wings of eagles, and shall run, and not be weary ?*"

A religion, founded upon a firm belief, that in every age since the time of the apostles, Christ, the supreme Head, does not withhold from any portion of his true militant church, his divine, immediate help, through the influence of his Holy Spirit, when it is rightly sought for by his living members ; and upon a practical application of this belief to the maintenance of gospel order, and of moral consistency, and of healthy vigour, in the outward visible church and body of which He is the Head ; — such a religion, I say, has brought upon the Society of Friends the taunts and jeers of many thousands, ever since it was established : so that because of this testimony to the perceptible guidance and direction of the "Holy Spirit," this sacred name became a bye-word in the mouths of its enemies.

But, in the present day, when the influence of the Holy Spirit is also admitted by other denominations of Christians, though in a restricted sense, which still falls short of the great principle professed by "The Society," the phrase, *Religion of Feelings*, seems to be employed, in order to continue the same system of reproach, which the bye-word of the "Spirit's" influence monopolized formerly.

A religion, such as I have defined, can in no proper sense be viewed as one of mere human "Feelings." Its economy could not subsist a single day on such a weak and slippery foundation. Those who imagine that the eccentric movements of feeling, with every help that reason itself (by all its skill, and control, and good management,) could supply in such a case, might be so regulated, without divine aid, as to organize and uphold, in any degree of proper order, a Christian society, like that of "Friends," are as ignorant of the philosophy of the human mind as they are of the first principles of the gospel.

The religion of "Quakers" is, in principle, a religion, of piety without enthusiasm, of faith without uncharitableness, and of conduct without reproach. It teaches its followers to look up in all things to God the Father, by the mediation of his Son Christ Jesus, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, for direction in thought, word, and deed; and for ability to think, speak, and act, according to the divine will. It enjoins a firm belief in, and the effusion of thankful hearts for the blessing of, those sacred records, which alone, of all outward evidences, give us the clear knowledge of the dealings of God with mankind, and

of the true nature of the plan of man's redemption, in all its parts.

And lastly, it enforces the practice of the most strict moral conduct, making a departure from sin, and a holy life, essential to the Christian character, and even to the maintenance of outward fellowship with the body.

ON EXTREME VIEWS IN DOCTRINE.

There never was, I believe, any era of the Christian church, in which men were not prone to carry some important doctrine to an extreme. It is a prevailing error of the present day, and it is a standing obstacle in the way of the advancement of truth. When we speak of carrying a doctrine sanctioned by Holy Writ to an extreme, let us not be misunderstood. If a doctrine be true, it must be received. But, in receiving it, we are bound to shew its accordancy with other doctrines, so as to preserve the harmony of the entire system, by viewing it in connexion with every other part, and considering it in relation to the whole: not but that extreme views, unwarranted by Scripture, may be taken of some doctrines of high importance.

Some minds are only capable of viewing one principle at a time, others can take in several principles at once, so as to understand their mutual dependence; as some men can only perceive the operation of a

piece of mechanism in separate or detached parts, while others can comprehend the principle of the entire movement in all its subordinate relations. In the same way there are some, who, either from a want of comprehension, or from attachment to a favourite dogma, rivet their attention so closely to one subject, as to disqualify themselves from seeing others, no less important, in their proper light. It is only on some principle like this, that I am able to account for the opposite and apparently conflicting views, men, of a particular cast of mind, are accustomed to take of different points of Christian faith. For, I think there is a tendency to form decided, what if I say exclusive opinions, both on speculative subjects and on matters of faith, in two classes of men more especially: viz. in those who are gifted with acute and penetrating, but narrow, powers of reasoning, and in those who are conspicuous for a pertinacious and unyielding judgment: the first taking extensive flights in one never-ending career of ingenious argument; the last making a decided stand on the ground they have once chosen to defend, with an indomitable firmness and striking singleness both of purpose and of ideas.

I will endeavour briefly to exemplify my meaning. Faith without works is the creed of some; works without faith is the doctrine of others. Scripture without the law written in the heart is the rule of some; the inward law without Scripture is the guide of others. Some men ascribe justification exclusively to the atoning sacrifice and imputative righteousness of Christ; others, to the sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit in the heart. Some argue for the assurance of salvation, and the impossibility of falling away

from grace, from the moment of conversion; others, with better reason, that men must work out their souls' salvation with fear and trembling," in a "continual warfare," keeping in view that check to presumption given forth by Peter, "If the righteous scarcely be saved." Some contend that the work is complete by an instantaneous act of regeneration; others, in better accordance with the tenor of all the gospel precepts, that there is a gradual progress from grace to grace, and from stature to stature. Passiveness under controlling grace is maintained by some; human activity is the necessary means of securing divine favour according to others;—man doing every thing in the view of the latter, the Almighty doing every thing in the view of the former. Hence, man's uncontrolled free agency is the doctrine of some; irresistible grace is the doctrine of others,—these supposing that, in the work of salvation, nothing can be effectual but what is done *without* them, those that every thing needful is done *by* them and *in* them. Other examples might be adduced to the same purpose.

The sober-minded Christian, who considers that things are so, and that in the age even of the apostles some were calling themselves after Paul, and some after Apollos, and some after Cephas, instead of all aiming to be followers of Christ, is led to evince his moderation, and his love of truth, by avoiding extremes, if he is not able to reconcile together principles, which appear upon a superficial view to clash with each other.

What then, is not the sober-minded Christian to have a clear and settled creed? Is he alone to be

wavering between points of faith, whilst he sees others fixed in them? Surely the only creed that he can legitimately adopt, is that which embraces, in a comprehensive view, every principle, whether of doctrine or of precept, unfolded by our Saviour and his apostles, in order to complete one grand scheme; regard being always had to the spirit of the Christian dispensation. For he that partially selects some principles, and excludes others, for the purpose of forming a favourite creed, gives a system of his own, that may well be called after his own name, because, embracing but a limited view, it can have no title to the catholic, universal name of "Christianity." He keeps, in fact, one eye open to the truth at one side, and the other eye shut against the truth at the other side; like a man, who being called to collect from each side of a rich mine some important treasures, which have so near a relation to each other *as greatly to enhance the value of both when they are united*, contents himself, notwithstanding, with digging up the treasure from one side only, and bringing it forth, prominently and boastingly, to the world, as the complete and exclusive treasure of the mine. What should we say of the honesty of such a man as is above represented, if he knew that the salvation of the soul were connected with a diligent and impartial search into the Divine Oracles, and yet, in composing his system of faith, should hide his face deliberately from doctrines which did not please him!

Exclusive dogmas are, in almost every instance, the invention of men, and properly enough called after their names, for they do not savour of Christ: while the mode in which Holy Scripture glances at these

things, is in that simple but undefined contrast of principles, seemingly opposite, while they are really in harmony, which at once shows a mystery, and holds out defiance to the affectedly precise definitions of presumptuous reason. There is scarcely a principle of the gospel that can be named, which has not another placed like an antagonist to it; and whatever may be the final cause of such a peculiarity in the doctrines of Christianity,—if it be lawful to speculate on final causes in relation to so divine a subject,—we may at least perceive these two good effects: first, that whenever human presumption shows itself dogmatically on one side, it is met authoritatively by Scripture on the other: and secondly, that in the very constitution of our holy religion, there is a foundation laid for the exercise of much charity and forbearance, inasmuch as different minds, according to the various casts of human character, may very conscientiously attach themselves to different views, provided they do not exceed the bounds of the unerring Standard of Truth.

Hence, it is necessary to show, that when we insist on faith, it is *dead* without works, and that works without faith are *dead* also; that Scripture without the Spirit to open it, is, as it is allowed to be by enlightened Christians of various denominations, as a dead letter, and that the light of the Spirit without the knowledge of Scripture, may be expected to leave the mind in ignorance of some of the most interesting truths in the history of God's dealings with mankind, and of the great plan of redemption by Jesus Christ,—for even some of the apostles appear to have been enlightened on some points that were veiled from others; that man's freedom of choice between good

and evil must be made to agree with the Divine attributes of Power, Justice, and Omniscience; that justification by faith in the atoning sacrifice is incomplete without holiness, wrought by the Holy Spirit in the heart, "without which," it is said, "no man shall see the Lord;" that a degree of earnestness and activity in the creature to work out the soul's salvation, is perfectly compatible with the merciful visitations of Divine Grace; and, that the great truth of the Unity of the Divine Being, is in harmony with the awful mystery, that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one eternal God.

Had there been more of a right disposition in the minds of Christians to refer to the Fountain of all truth itself, we should, I am persuaded, have heard less of those distinctive appellations, which many sects have acknowledged, by appropriating to themselves the names of some eminent men, distinguished for their zeal in propounding points of Faith.

Now, I am free to state my deliberate conviction, that the Society of Friends have not in any thing more conspicuously shown their wisdom, than in keeping aloof from some of those extreme, or rather exclusive opinions, to which I have adverted, that have had so desolating an effect in the Christian Church, by opening sources of contention and of division.

The principles of the Society, founded as they all are upon the essentially spiritual nature of the gospel dispensation, are characterized, in my judgment, not only by the closest approximation to those of the primitive believers, but by the greatest "*moderation*,"—if I may use this term to denote the sober and temperate spirit in which the testimonies of the Society are

maintained,—in charity to all men, yet in religious firmness and devotedness to the great standard of truth and righteousness, which they feel themselves called upon to support in the view of the world, whatever obloquy, and derision, and unjust charges of unsoundness in faith, they may be exposed to in consequence.

In a day like this, when outward blessings are so largely afforded, and instrumental means not sparingly used, to promulgate the truths of the gospel, both in the dissemination of the Holy Scriptures throughout the world, and in the labours of devoted preachers to make known “the glad tidings of salvation” to the ends of the earth; it is scarcely to be wondered at, that some of the zealous friends of Christianity should lean to the opinion, that an inward spring of spiritual life is never opened in the human heart, or is wholly inefficacious, without those instrumental means. For when dependence has for so long a time been placed upon the outward means, there is more of a disposition to question the reality of an inward visitation of divine grace to the souls of men. And when the expectation of men is entirely confined to the outward view, and the outward means, it must follow as a matter of course, that the talent of grace—that “kingdom of God” in the heart, which “cometh not with observation,” but “is within,”—will be neglected; as the Prince of light himself was neglected, because he did not appear to the Jews in a manner conformable to their outward expectations. Hence, there appears to me to be a state of things, at the present time, unfavourable to a full public acknowledgment in the Christian world, of the great doctrines, of the secret or invisible working of

Christ's spirit in the heart, and of Universal and Saving Light.

I shall, therefore, avail myself of the opportunity now afforded me, to make some observations, in addition to those in the former part of this "Defence," in vindication of these doctrines. The subject is not a light one, as it respects the Constitution of the Society of Friends: for it is clear to my view, that the Society can only stand upon the foundation of these testimonies: and any attempt to undermine them is an attempt to destroy the whole building, which has stood for nearly two centuries upon this basis, and, I may add, has stood firmly. Attacks from without have been made in vain: attacks from within have also proved, and will, I trust, continue to prove, as ineffectual. But while I stand forth in defence of these principles, as a volunteer in the cause, it becomes me to say that the responsibility rests only on myself, and that if I prove a weak advocate,—for though my faith in the ground of these testimonies is strong, I am sensible of my incompetency to do justice to so weighty a subject,—the Society is not to be made accountable either for my omissions, or for any imperfect expositions of its doctrines into which I may possibly have fallen.

DIVINE GIFTS BESTOWED FOR USE OR ABUSE.

It has pleased the Creator of the universe, that his various outward gifts and blessings to his rational creatures should be subject to one great law, that of holding them for use or for abuse; either to be ill or well employed; and that man should accordingly reap the fruits, either of his diligence or of his neglect. His senses, his talents, his reason, and his outward possessions, are all subject to this law. This is a truth well understood in every age of the world, and among the inhabitants of every nation. The universal principles of justice and virtue are established upon it.

Now, it has also pleased the Father of mercies, in his love to the human race, that the greatest and best gift ever conferred upon his revolted children, even the "unspeakable gift" of his divine grace, should be subject to the same law. The commandments, the promises, the covenants, the warnings, the expostulations, the threatenings, and the judgments, set forth in the Holy Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelations, proceed upon the clear ground, that man is accountable to his Maker for the knowledge of good and evil he has received, in whatever measure this light or knowledge may have been obtained, and for the moral choice he may make between them. No nation upon the face of the earth is entirely ignorant of the inward law on which moral obligation rests; and no individual, except the infant, the idiot, or the insane, exists, in whom the

tribunal of conscience is not erected. To suppose a rational creature, without this "umpire," is to suppose a being that has never yet been seen.

This conscience is indeed liable to be *defiled*, like the temple of the heart in the Christian believer himself; but the *reprover* in the conscience is no natural principle,—something distinct in the Pagan and in the revolting or disobedient Christian. It is the same *reprover* in both: and philosophers have erred in attributing the obscured light in the Heathen, and the clearer light in the Christian, to a different fountain. Not a single sound argument can be found for such a distinction.

It is altogether a vain and presumptuous inquiry, why, in the counsels of his infinite wisdom, the Almighty should have subjected his glorious and best gifts to such humiliation and lamentable perversion. Whether we consider the appearance of our blessed Lord upon this earth, and the ignominious treatment he then experienced from the Jews, or the manner in which his Holy Spirit is now treated in the hearts of millions of our fellow creatures,—despised, "resisted, quenched," and even "turned to lasciviousness,"—we must perceive that even these holy gifts have not been exempted from the law in question.

Now this is not a view founded upon a fanciful analogy or a philosophical speculation. It is a view deducible, as I shall endeavour to show, from parables, from declarations, and from doctrines, scattered abundantly in the New Testament.

OF IMMEDIATE REVELATION.

In the Holy Scripture, we find the "kingdom of heaven" likened, by our blessed Lord, in those parables by which he was pleased to open the views of his spiritual dominion in the soul, unto a seed,—talent,—leaven,—treasure hid in a field. But the words "kingdom of heaven" must be understood, in this case, to mean the *dawn* or principle of everlasting glory, with which the hearts of men were visited in this life, for their deliverance from the bondage of sin and darkness, by the appearance of Jesus Christ,—*outwardly* to the Jews in the days of his flesh, but *inwardly*, both to them and to the Gentiles, by his free spirit. For we find it distinctly stated by our Saviour, even to the rigid and self-righteous pharisees, that "the kingdom of God is within you," and that "it cometh not with observation." Luke xvii. 20, 21.

Again, we have the testimony of the evangelist John, that Christ was "the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We have also that of Paul, that "the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men;" and the declaration of the same apostle, that "a manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."

Now, when we compare what is said of the contingent gain or loss that may befall the "seed" or "talent," we find that the same may befall the "light," "grace," or "manifestation of the Spirit;" proving that the similès

employed can only refer to the good gift, which these latter terms severally represent.

When we examine further, we discover that to each of the similes, as well as to the great principle which the simile represents,—if it be right to call *that* a principle which we believe to be a spiritual substance,—*Something* is annexed in the description or explication of it, which shows the *restricted, unevolved, or imprisoned* state, previous to its enlargement or increase, in which it may be supposed to exist in the human soul, till this is animated, and quickened, by renewed visitations of the Holy Spirit.

As to the similes, we observe, “the grain of mustard seed which a man cast into his garden,” and “which is *less* than all the seeds that be in the earth,” Luke xiii. 19, and Mark iv. 31; “the talent *hid* in the earth,” Matt. xxv. 25; “the leaven *hid* in the meal,” Luke xiii. 21; “the good seed sown by the Son of man among thorns,—by the way side,—in stony places,” Matt. xiii. 19; “a treasure *hid* in a field,” Matt. xiii. 44.

As to the principle itself, we read that “the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not,” John i. 5; and that the grace of God, and manifestation of the Spirit, were liable to be “frustrated” and abused, or dishonoured, in various ways.

For, as the “talent” might be kept unemployed “in a napkin,” instead of being used to profit; and the “seed” might be “devoured,” “choked,” and “trodden down,” instead of producing an increase in the good ground; and the “new leaven” might be impeded in its operation by the “old leaven of malice,” instead of being suffered “to leaven the whole lump;” and the

“treasure hid in a field,” and the “goodly pearl,” might either be the sole object of the merchant, or might not be purchased at all: so, the light, we are told, might be changed to darkness, instead of being allowed free liberty “to fill the whole body full of light;” the grace and gift of God might be “received in vain—neglected—fallen from,” and even “turned into lasciviousness,” instead of being “heeded—stirred up—used by a good steward,” and “made to abound;” and the manifestation of the Spirit given to every man “to profit withal,” instead of this profit, might be “grieved—resisted”—and “quenched.” Now, I put it to the plainest understanding, whether the *similès* are not to be regarded as belonging to one and the same thing, and whether this thing is not the light, gift, grace, word nigh in the heart, or manifestation of Christ’s own Spirit in the soul—that seed or spark of heavenly power, which, in the dark heart of man, is not “comprehended,” but, in the enlightened heart, is expanded and kindled into a godly flame?

Many considerations, it appears to me, unite to strengthen this view. For whether it be admitted or not, that the outward word from His holy lips and the divine commission to His immediate followers, *then*, for the first time, planted a seed which had not existed before, and *then first* kindled a spark of the heavenly kingdom in the heart, by a visitation of love such as had never been known; the terms imply that the seed, rudiment, or beginning of this heavenly kingdom, promulgated in the gospel, was an active principle of life within the soul, and not some outward object, or extraneous influence, either past, present, or to come. The terms, I say, distinctly imply, that something of a

holy nature was bestowed on man, which it was incumbent upon him to receive and to use to profit, or which he might turn from and reject,—that it was, in fact, so far within his power as to be committed to his stewardship.

But, inasmuch as it is believed, that the saving efficacy of Christ's coming, including the great sacrifice he made for sin, extended to all good men who preceded him from the days of Adam—to all, in fact, who were obedient to the law of God, manifested in the conscience, in every age and nation;—it seems to be a warrantable conclusion, that it was His Spirit which influenced mankind in every age, and therefore that His Spirit was not, either then, or on the day of Pentecost, *for the first time only*, placed in the human heart.

Christ was *before* Abraham, John viii. 58: and “*This Gospel* the Spirit of God preached to Abraham under the Old Testament.”* Christ was with the Israelites in the wilderness: “for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and *that Rock was Christ*,” 1 Cor. x. 4. “Unto us,” says the apostle, “was the gospel preached, as well as unto them”—the Israelites in the wilderness. “And they to whom *the gospel was first preached*, entered not in, because of unbelief.”—Heb. iv. 2, 6.

I think we can scarcely doubt, therefore, that this holy *seed* was another name for the divine principle in the hearts of men, on which a life of immortality was founded, and that the distribution of it was not partial, or confined to the hearts of the good, who obeyed its dictates. Because, if we consider the case of the unrighteous in that day, many, we know, were hardened,

* Cruden, verbo, Gospel.

so that they neither saw with their eyes, nor heard with their ears, nor understood with their heart, but "closed their eyes" against it, "resisted" its heavenly influence, and in conduct proclaimed that they would not have it for a Prince and Ruler. And, as we are distinctly told in the words of the martyr, Stephen, that the Holy Ghost was "resisted" by the Jews, "*uncircumcised in heart and ears,*" as well as by their "fathers," (Acts vii. 51,) and must infer that the Holy Spirit "strove in"* the descendants of Adam, before the flood, till judgment, "after the long-suffering of God," (Peter) came upon them; we have reason to conclude, that the *seed* was not *first* sown, whatever new life might have been imparted to it, at the time when the MESSIAH appeared.

But, while it must be admitted that His actual appearance and preaching in the world, *did* produce a miraculous, unprecedented, and divinely renewed visitation to the sons and daughters of men, such as had never been known; yet this visitation was of such a character, that, with all the accompaniments of supernatural power to recommend it to the people, it was not *forced* upon any, but was offered to the free acceptance of all, and might therefore be rejected, or received; according to the previous state and temper of those who were prepared or not to admit the divine influence to act freely upon them.

Upon a consideration of these things, I am led to inquire, whether the accidents or contingencies, to which the holy principle in the heart of man is liable—this grace, light, gift, illustrated as it is in the parables—do not prove, that it is originally in a state, though itself of

* בָּאֵדָם (ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, Sept.) in man. Gen. vi. 3.

a divine nature, *not* triumphant, nor in complete development, and possessing free scope for displaying its heavenly qualities ; but, on the contrary, obscured and scarcely permitted to emerge into visible life and power ? It is, in fact, by the prevalence of darkness, and corruption, and earthly-mindedness, impeded in growth and trodden down, instead of being obeyed, used to profit, and raised into dominion over its enemies.

But, if we regard this important subject in another point of view, we shall find a very striking parallel, and as striking an illustration of the great principle which I think involved in it, and which I am anxious to set forth. What has been said of the light, gift, grace, and Spirit of God, in the heart of man, may be seen in Holy Scripture to have been literally accomplished in the outward appearance and manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh. I need not refer to the Lord of Glory, "who, being in the form of God," "took upon him the form of a servant," "and was made in the likeness of men ;" nor to his immaculate but lowly birth, his obscure outward parentage, the manner in which he was despised by his own kindred and his own nation, his humiliation, sufferings, and death. I need not speak of the "contradiction of sinners" which he patiently endured, the contempt and ignominy to which he was exposed, and the charges of treason, impiety, and blasphemy, that were brought against him. These things shew, that, however contrary such a state of humiliation, in so glorious a Being, might be to the outward expectations and reasonings of men, yet such was the depravity of human nature in the gross, and such the permitted temporary ascendancy of evil over

good in the world, that, while his kingdom was designed to be an everlasting kingdom, the beginning of its manifestation in the world was dark and clouded, and only cheered by the brief but glorious display of his miraculous power, which his love to those *who were conscious of their own spiritual or bodily diseases*, led him to make for their recovery.

But why do I make this remark? It is in order to show that there is an analogy, too close in my opinion to be fanciful, between the outward and the inward life of Christ — if I may so speak of the outward and inward appearance of his living power, exclusively in its relation to mankind — I say the outward and the inward life of Christ, *as it has been manifested amongst men*; and there is likewise such a correspondence between these, and what is said of the Holy Spirit, and the light, and gift, and grace of God, that I apprehend no unsophisticated mind, which shall take the trouble to put all these things together, can fail to see such a harmony and unity of principle in the whole, as will carry irresistible conviction along with it, that the doctrine of Immediate Revelation, under the gospel dispensation, by the influence of Christ's Holy Spirit, is a sound doctrine, and cannot be overturned, unless the very key-stone is taken away from the building of Christian faith.

In pursuing this important subject a little further, there seem to be two other circumstances, which may both be applied to the illustration of the same principle, viz.—**THE LOWLY AND HUMBLE APPEARANCE OF DIVINE TRUTH IN THE WORLD.**

The one is, the manner in which it was introduced by our Saviour himself, or the channel he directly

sanctioned : the other, its simple and gentle manifestations in the hearts of men. All outward glory, all boasting, all high pretension, were foreign to its character ; and still continue to be so. The customs and the institutions of men *may* pervert, but they cannot change, the relations which Infinite Wisdom seems to have established between humility and the blessed truth. The seed from which it springs, and the soil in which it grows, if it grows at all, are so identified with its nature, that to expect this heavenly plant to grow from any other root, or in any other soil, would be as unreasonable, as to look for figs from thistles, or for olives in the sandy desert.

If we look at the original constitution of the Church, we see this principle exemplified. Who were the instruments chosen by the Author of our faith for the establishment of his religion ? Were they "the wise," and "the mighty," and "the noble" ? No: they were the "poor among men," the "ignorant and unlearned," the "base, and those who were despised." (Acts and 1 Cor.) These were the instruments chosen by the Founder of Christianity, in perfect accordance with the humility of his own appearance, to bear a living and a powerful testimony to his truth, in order that the faith of his people "should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."

In immediate connexion with this view, as we have seen the character of the instruments chosen to propagate it, let us see the nature of the congenial soil in which the truth was to be planted — every thing in harmony with the principle. Let us, therefore, inquire who were the best prepared to receive the truth into their hearts ? Were they "the rich and the full,"

and the learned, and those in high esteem amongst men, and the rulers, and those who were exulting in outward gladness of heart? No: they were the "meek," the "poor in spirit," "the weary and heavy laden," "the reviled and persecuted for righteousness' sake," the "peace makers," the "merciful," the "mourners." They were those who "humbled themselves," and who "took up the cross," and became docile "as little children." These all had something within them, which had an essential correspondence or affinity with Divine truth; and they united with it as easily as the drop of water mingles with its kindred element. But, the others had no congeniality, no harmony, no common sympathy with the heavenly visitant; for their minds were altogether engrossed with the world and its maxims, and were growing and flourishing in a different soil. Therefore, they repulsed the meek and unpretending stranger, as the proud man turns away the mendicant from his gate.

Now, as the gospel is not changed, what applied to it *then*, applies to it *now*; what was a fit disposition *then*, is a fit disposition *now*; and what was of a hostile character *then*, is of a hostile character *now*.

The humiliation of the cross is, *now*, "the stumbling block" to the mighty; and the "foolishness of the cross," is the "offence" to the wise: and, as long as the world subsists, the truth of God will maintain its unchangeable character. It will lift up the humble, and it will cast down the haughty; it will have unity with the meek, and it will be at enmity with the proud; it will make wise the simple, and it will "take the wise in their own craftiness," and "destroy their wisdom," so that they must become "fools," in order

"that they may be wise." This truth is a paradox to those who are only learned in the wisdom of this world, and it is hidden from them : but, blessed be the Lord ! it continues to be revealed "as unto babes."

Men, governed by the maxims, and interests, of the world, have long been endeavouring to force an alliance between its grandeur, and its learning, and its pomp, and the meekness, and lowliness, and simplicity, of gospel truth : and they have succeeded in establishing a connexion, in which the name of Christianity, indeed, appears : but the spirit, and the life, and the purity, are gone !

There is, if we may employ a metaphor, in almost every country where the religion of Jesus Christ has obtained an accredited admission, a splendid structure, dignified by the name, enriched by wealth, attractive by the honours it confers, and adorned by its ornaments, derived as well from art as from literature and science, which, though it seeks by more human efforts to rival the glory of that temple, that David, gifted as he was, being a man who had "shed much blood," was not permitted to build : yet, because its outward appearance is beautiful, and its internal order highly imposing, its real desolation is not generally seen.

The second circumstance, in which I have above alluded, is the simple and humble manifestation of truth in the hearts of men.

And as those who are willing to admit the doctrine of a Revelation of the Divine will, yet are seeking in their minds for "some great thing" to be manifested to them as these, I say, consider the above appearance in this humble manner it is first impressions. It is to be desired that its worth should be fixed in

the storm of passion, or in the confusion of carnal reasonings, or in the heat of natural emotion. It is not in "the strong wind," nor in "the earthquake," nor "in the fire." Let them look at the Holy pattern of Christian humility, whose voice, it was declared, no man should "hear in the streets." (Matt. xii. 19.) Let them consider the analogy of outward things, and that there are elements of spiritual as well as of natural knowledge—a language *to* and *in* the soul, answering to the cry of "Abba, Father!"—that the school of Christ is one in which simple lessons are first taught, and that, when the spiritual senses are exercised, deeper truths are discovered; that "milk is for babes," and "meat for strong men;" that, as the faith, which is at first "little," may become "great," (like "the least of all seeds" becoming "the greatest among herbs,") so he that is faithful in obedience "to the little," will be "made ruler over more." Thus, we are taught to believe, that the voice of the Spirit of truth is at first uttered in the soul, in very gentle accents; that it is emphatically a "STILL SMALL VOICE;" that from time to time it is heard more and more distinctly, in proportion as it is obeyed; and that its illuminating effect upon "the path of the just," is as "a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." But, on the other hand, we have reason to believe, that he that is not "faithful in that which is least," is not "faithful in much," and, therefore, that "from him shall be taken away even that he hath;" that whosoever "despises the day of small things," cannot reasonably expect "to enlarge the place of his tent;" and, as a necessary consequence, that a counsellor never con-

sulted will cease to impart counsel, and a voice which is not heeded will cease to be heard, unless it is heard as in the awful thunder of a divine judgment, or is silenced by repeated acts of disobedience in the deadly repose of obdurate guilt.

If those, who are willing to admit the doctrine of Immediate Revelation, will consider these things, in that sober view, which the Scriptures of Truth lead us to take of this doctrine, they will then see, that its advocates, in principle, guard themselves on every hand from the danger of error; because they take up the doctrine, in the simplicity of faith, and in the humility of truth, having their view equally remote from extravagant pretensions and from unchristian doubts.

I am quite aware of the theory of some—a weak and disjointed theory—that the grace of God, wherever it is present, because it is divine, is overpowering, and cannot be resisted, in its operations, by man. The grace of God *in itself* is omnipotent, as Christ is omnipotent. But, in as much as it has been placed in conflict with the darkness and corruption of the world, which have evidently withstood the unclouded display of the Divine Majesty upon the earth, ever since Adam fell, the Almighty has been pleased to permit that, hitherto, it should not appear, among men, in the dignity and glory that belong to its heavenly character.

And there can be no doubt, that such as reason upon the matter, according to the theory above adverted to, if they could have had their own will and desires in the coming of our blessed Lord in the flesh, as to the mode and character, in which they would have thought it consistent with his divine majesty to appear, would never have allowed it possible, he should be mocked,

buffeted, reviled, spit upon, and put to death by ungodly men : forgetting that this was symbolical of the way in which he would afterwards be treated in his inward appearance, by thousands in the world ; and that it was according to the counsels of Infinite Wisdom, to permit the Son of his bosom, who had all power given him notwithstanding, to be treated with these indignities, and exposed to open reproach among sinners whom he came to save. For, without noticing the many figurative expressions of the apostles, especially of Paul to the early churches, in relation to the spiritual manifestation of Christ, in that day, in the hearts of the primitive believers—to which I shall soon advert ;—whoever takes a view of the present state of the world, and even of all Christian societies, and of the manner in which, without breach of Christian charity, individuals around us do openly trample upon, contend against, and “crucify the Son of God afresh, putting him to open shame,” must allow, that the “Life of God in the soul of man,” which is the “Life of Christ,” is, in too many of our fellow-creatures, not suffered to have the pre-eminence, but is obstructed, resisted, and often slain !

In accordance with what has been said, it is clear to my view, that there is a powerful influence arrayed in the present day, to assert and to support the notion of the superior efficacy of what man has power to do, above that which Christ, the Supreme Head of the Church, is conceived to be willing to do, for the enlargement of his own kingdom. Because, if the principle, that Christ can and will teach his true followers Himself, were generally allowed, and His Spirit in the heart were more universally obeyed, the efforts of man, in so far as

they are supported by unhallowed motives and means, and are not under the appointment of Christ himself, would be found grievously wanting, and therefore would be set aside; while his meek and dependent followers, under his immediate leading, would be moved forward to supply their places—a chosen and a faithful band—to extend the knowledge of his heavenly kingdom, by that gospel, which “is the power of God unto salvation,” and consisteth “not in word, but in power.” We cannot, indeed, wonder, when we see so few, professing the Christian name, disposed to place implicit faith in the teaching and guidance of Christ himself, that the want of faith should produce, in this day, the same effect, which it had in the beginning of the gospel dispensation,—a want of the palpable demonstration of his divine power in enlarging his church. Faith in his saving power, and in his spiritual guidance, is as needful, in order to produce the blessed effect, *now*, as it was *then*.

When all Christian sects have more of this living faith, so as to know and feel “that Christ is in them, by the Spirit, which he has given them,” then, indeed, will his name and power be more exalted, than it now is, in the earth; for then they will drink of the Fountain of life itself, and will come and see his glory!

After what has been said, therefore, unless the principle for which I contend be granted, viz. the absolute necessity for the immediate superintending care of Christ’s Holy Spirit, in the government of every church called after his name, as well as in the sanctification and spiritual guidance of every individual of the flock, I think it will be difficult, if not impossible, to explain what is meant in so many passages of Holy Scripture, as I am now about to adduce.

What is meant by Christ's own declarations, that He is "the Way, the truth, and the life," John xiv. 6; that he is "the Bread of life," John vi. 35; that he is "the good Shepherd," John x. 14; that he is "the true Vine, of which no branch could bear fruit of itself," John xv. 4; that "where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is He in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. 20; that He would be "with his disciples always, to the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20; that He would give them "a mouth and wisdom," Luke xxi. 15; and that "without Him, they could do nothing," John xv. 5?

For, if it be objected, that these sayings were addressed to his immediate followers exclusively, I would then observe, that if Christians, so highly favoured and largely commissioned as these were, still required his immediate help, through the aid of His Spirit in the Comforter, what then should happen to Christ's devoted followers, in after ages, who might be far less favoured with divine grace, and therefore less qualified to act, in any capacity in his church, than the divinely anointed apostles, if this immediate help was to be withheld from those who faithfully implored it? But, further, we are bound to distinguish between the conversion of the sinner and the unbeliever to his church, and the economy of the church itself—between those who are noviciates in the faith and scarcely redeemed from their sins, and those who are grounded in the faith and ensamples of holiness to the flock: because, as the sinner and the unbeliever, while they are such, whether called by his name or not, could not be expected to promote the enlargement of his kingdom in the earth, it must follow that the means for enlarging his

kingdom must be entirely in the hands of those who are his true, not his nominal disciples, acting by his power, working in them, to that end. Now, Christ himself declared, in general terms, such as I think could scarcely be applied solely to the immediate followers, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered," John xv. 6; and he prayed, not for his disciples alone, "but for them also that should believe in Him through their word; that they ALL might be ONE: as the Father in Him, and He in the Father: so they should be one, in the Father and in Him." John xvii. 26. Hence, I conclude, that Christians, in every age, could only draw their living supplies from Him, the eternal fountain of all sufficiency.

But, let us proceed to consider what is said by the apostles, in addressing the early churches, in reference to this principle. For, surely, the early churches ought not to be considered in a light very different from that of rightly constituted Christian churches afterwards, with regard to the privileges which belong to any part of the great Christian commonwealth. What does the apostle of the Gentiles mean, in writing to the Ephesians, and the Colossians, by Christ being "the Head of the church," Eph. v. 23; and Col. i. 18; ("who," says Cruden, "communicates life, motion, and strength, to every believer,"*) and "the chief corner stone of that holy temple," in which they (the primitive believers) "were builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 20—22; or, as Peter says, adopting the same metaphor, in addressing "the strangers scattered abroad," who, as "lively stones," "are coming to the Lord, as unto a living stone," "are

* Concordance, verbo, Head.

built up a spiritual house and holy priesthood," 1 Peter ii. 5?

If it be not to establish this principle, what is meant by "the Great High Priest," "over the house of God," "who is passed into heaven," "and ever liveth to make intercession for them that come unto God by him," Heb. vii. 25; and x. 21?

Again, what is meant by the apostle Paul, exhorting the primitive believers "to examine themselves" if Christ were in them, 2 Cor. xiii. 5; and "travailing in birth" "till Christ were formed in them," Gal. iv. 19; and proclaiming to them, "Christ in them, the hope of glory," Col. i. 27; and declaring that "if they had not the Spirit of Christ, they were none of his," Rom. viii. 9; and praying that "Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith," Eph. iii. 17; and assuring them that he "could do all things himself through Christ who strengthened him," Phil. iv. 13?

What, I would ask, do all these things mean? — metaphors, declarations, promises, injunctions, earnest intreaties, solemn assurances, and supplications — all tending to the same point, some delivered by our Saviour himself, and some by two of the apostles, — if the important doctrine of Christ being the immediate Teacher, Guide, and Ruler of his true church and people, by his own free Spirit, as well as their Redeemer, Sanctifier, and Saviour, in every age of the glorious gospel dispensation, be nothing more than a visionary notion, taken up in the heat of enthusiasm, by some pretenders to divine illumination!

Now, that Christ continues, by his life-giving presence, not in name only but in power, to be the supreme head to his true Church and its living members,

wherever they are scattered, is to my view as clear a principle, as that the branches cannot live without the vine, or the members of the natural body without the head. Who can believe that if those, professing the Christian faith, had kept close to this principle and to the practice which it involves, they would have fallen away into the speculative and practical errors which marked those early ages of the gospel when the lamp of Christianity began to burn dim? Is the heavenly direction of Christ by the Holy Spirit, less needed now than it was in the beginning, to regulate the assemblies of his people, to preserve them in gospel order, to prepare the offerings acceptable in his holy sight, to ordain his ministers and servants according to their several gifts, to commission his ambassadors, and to open their mouths either to the flock, or to preach the gospel to them that are afar off, in the demonstration and power of the Spirit? What has occurred to supersede this divine help and influence? Is man invested now with a greater natural or spiritual ability to do the Lord's work; so that the great minister of ministers is understood to be no longer required to be immediately accessible to his people, but by the medium of *outward ordinances*? Or, are the assemblies of his people abandoned by him entirely to outward pastors, so that, except for the teaching of these, they are liable to error; and every man after his own delusion, left to move in his own ability, to think his own thoughts, to speak his own words, to do his own will, and thus to usurp the place of living branches in the true vine, instead of acknowledging Christ to be "all in all," Redeemer, Saviour, Leader, Teacher, Bishop, Shepherd, High Priest, and King?

To *acknowledge* Christ as Saviour, is *one thing*: to feel and *know him* to be the actuating Spirit, is *another*: and this is the great principle which I am endeavouring to enforce, as one of vital importance in true Christian Divinity. Have not many been satisfying themselves with one half of the right view of man's redemption by Christ—that which he purchased by his blood—truly a sufficient sacrifice for sin? But let us remember that “He bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sin, should live unto righteousness,” 1 Pet. ii. 24; and that “whoever doth not righteousness is not of God.” 1 John iii. 10. Supposing, then, that the atoning sacrifice were enough for the sinner, under circumstances of an unusual extension of divine mercy, to justify him freely before God, is it to be concluded that it is in itself altogether sufficient for the saint? If it were, where can we see the necessity for the apostle, when he was addressing the Galatians as his little children, who we may therefore presume, were so far initiated into the Church of Christ as to have partaken largely of the benefits of the propitiatory sacrifice, by which alone they could have been cleansed from their sins—where can we see the necessity, in such a case, for his expressing his wonder, that they “were so soon removed from him who called them into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel,” and his alarm, lest “having begun in the Spirit, they should seek to be made perfect by the flesh;” and his earnest travail “till Christ should be formed in them?” Again, where can we see the necessity, on that principle, for the same apostle praying to God, that the Ephesians, who, he says, were “made nigh by the blood of Christ,”

and were "fellow-citizens with the saints," might be "strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man;" "that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith;" and, at the same time, exhorting them "to put on the new man;" to speak the truth every man to his neighbour; not to grieve the Spirit; to be kind one to another, and to be attentive to many other social and moral duties? (See Eph. chap. iv. v. & vi.) Do not these charges of the apostle prove that an ulterior work, in addition to that which was effected in the sinner by the outward sacrifice of Christ, was still essential, in order to "perfect holiness in the fear of God?"

Is the doctrine to be established, that all, in the congregations of Christians, as they are at present, are to be accounted as sinners, who are to be addressed as having "put off their sins," by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, but have not "put on Christ," and need not the clothing of his Spirit? If this be the real state of the Christian Church at present, how much, alas! does it differ from that state in which it stood, when those who professed the religion of Christ in the early church, could be addressed as "saints," who "in every thing," were "enriched by Christ in all utterance and in all knowledge." Surely, it could never be intended that, in any age, men should so far leave the true foundation as with mutual consent to adopt a standard so low as this, and to strive to consecrate it by their faith and practice.

From all these considerations I conclude, that the immediate spiritual government of Christ in his church *is as necessary now as it ever was*; that it has never been superseded, at least by any right authority with

which I am acquainted; and that it is administered, if administered at all, by men of clean hands, clothed with his Spirit, and acting directly under his holy influence. And the inference which I draw from it is, that neither the priest, nor the outward letter of Holy Scripture, can stand as a mediator between Christ Himself, who is our only mediator, and the souls of men, so as to bar their direct access to his footstool; and that any Christian Church which is organized without reference to this principle, is not organized after the spirit of the gospel, but after the weakness of men, and their unwillingness to approach its standard, through a conformity, in a greater or less degree, to the maxims of the world.

It seems to me, that every good man acts upon the principle, that there is a protecting Providence over him, and that he cannot divest his mind of the persuasion. And what true Christian is there, who does not feel, that there is a never-failing help to which he can flee for succour, or who doubts the high privilege and safety of seeking counsel of Him who never slumbers, and who does not believe that his humble petition for divine aid is not only permitted, but is often answered?

If it be a truth, that the branches are united to the vine, and the stones to the building, and the members to the body, by an indissoluble union, it surely is a truth, that Christ is united to his church. And, if it be also a truth, that the father is attached to his children, and the master to his faithful servant, and that the Shepherd has a tender care over his flock, then is it a fair presumption, that the Great Head of the Church has a merciful regard to the least of those, who, on their part, have made sacrifice by obedience, and have taken

up the cross, and acknowledged him to be their Saviour; and whom, on his part, he has chosen, and redeemed, and sanctified, and adopted as his humble followers. If he be their spiritual High Priest, will he not give them counsel; if he be the Bread of Life, will he not feed them; if he be their Leader, will he not guide them? Can we, then, deny the doctrine of Immediate Revelation, if these suppositions—and each of them is a scripture truth—be admitted? Or, are all these things to be understood in some outward sense, which excludes his immediate help, and limits his spiritual aid to the intermediate influence of an outward pastor, and of an outward ordinance? The light of Christ is the light of his people. Does this light shine in the hearts of his children, and yet afford them no immediate light? The sun is not, surely, more necessary in the outward creation, than is His divine influence in the regenerate soul.

IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO GOD UNDER THE GOSPEL.

The doctrine of Immediate Revelation is one, which, in its enlarged sense, takes in the very ground on which the inspiration of the Holy Scripture is built, because if there had not been immediate revelation, the Holy Scripture itself never could have been known. At the same time, before and under the Levitical Law, the great privilege of holding communion with God, in a clear, intelligible manner, was nearly restricted to a few

holy patriarchs, prophets, and high priests, who conveyed the knowledge of the divine will to a people too much absorbed in sensual gratification, to partake generally of so high a blessing. But after that the Messiah appeared upon the earth, through whom life and immortality were brought to light by the gospel, and that there was a great and luminous display of divine power, both by miraculous gifts and by an abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit upon Jews and Gentiles, when the heart of every true Christian might become a temple for God himself to dwell in; then was the Almighty pleased to reveal his will immediately to thousands and to tens of thousands, and to acknowledge his people "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." The outward temple was to be removed, and even the economy of the outward temple, with all its imposing appendages of worship, in sacrifices, and rites, and ordinances, and human ministrations, either by the high priest or by the priest. Because there was now an invisible eternal High Priest,—the people themselves, sanctified by the Spirit, were "a royal priesthood;"—the sacrifice had been offered once for all,—the types were fulfilled in the great Anti-type himself,—the ordinances were abrogated, and "the hand-writing nailed to the cross," because the spiritual substance might now be attained,—and the temple, in which the Lord was pleased that acceptable worship should be rendered unto him, was declared to be not an outward temple, however glorious, such as that at Jerusalem, but the purified temple of the human heart.

Hence, Immediate Revelation, to the Christian, is that high and important privilege, by which, without the

intervention of man, as either high priest or priest, he is permitted himself "to come boldly to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. iv. 16.

OF UNIVERSAL AND SAVING LIGHT.

The doctrine of Universal and Saving Light is one, which no one who believes in the exclusive and absolute necessity of outward ministry, and of the outward letter, to the salvation of the soul, can possibly admit. The doctrines are incompatible. Hence, it is needful, whilst we advocate this "universal evangelical principle," as it is called by Barclay, that we should not be suspected of thinking lightly of the great privilege and advantage of those external means of salvation, which had so high a sanction, both from Christ and his Apostles.

With this observation I shall proceed to consider, as briefly as I can, some of the grounds for maintaining this very important doctrine.

I have before alluded to the principle that *something* has been placed in the human heart, without which, it would scarcely be reasonable, or according to analogy, to expect, that any good thing, such as truth or virtue, could be received and substantially appropriated, so as to make a saving impression; whether conveyed into the mind discursively, as in reasoning and meditation, or by the ear, as in preaching, or by a written record, as in the perusal of Holy Scripture.

Besides this, the unevolved, oppressed state, in which we may suppose this seed of divine life to exist in the unregenerate, unquickened soul, has been also adverted to; and it would seem, that we cannot know much more of this great mystery, than from the light the parables throw upon it. It might, indeed, be a question with many, whether it was first implanted by our blessed Saviour when he was in the world, and by the Apostles, in his name, afterwards, or had a previous existence from the beginning. In the one case or the other, its humble, oppressed state has been briefly shewn, by a condensed view of Scripture testimonies bearing upon that principle.

Now, though very unwilling to make so divine a theme a subject of mere speculation, because the attempt seems to hold out a belief that, by the help of the human understanding, it might be possible to explain a matter which is much veiled even in Holy Scripture; yet I venture to propose a few remarks, by way of analogy, which have sometimes occurred to my mind, on considering this interesting subject, without, I trust, any wish to lay greater stress upon them, than as they may seem to agree with the testimony of scripture. For, as there is an analogy, so far as their use or abuse is concerned, between the natural faculties and the gift of grace, and as there is also an analogy between spiritual and natural things, which is largely exemplified in the truths delivered by our Saviour himself, it does not seem to be presuming too far to endeavour to illustrate what appears to be a sacred truth, by some further analogy, if this analogy be drawn from natural things.

Now, it appears to me as reasonable to suppose

that the earth, however manured and watered, could bring forth a plant, without seed, or that a being, without some natural implanted sense of proportion or number, might be taught geometry or arithmetic, as that the feeblest motion of divine life in the soul, could arise from any other source than the seed of this divine life. And it is, I think, fair to ask, how, if there were not in the heart of man, dark and perverse as it is by nature, this gift or seed, — which philosophers, we know, called by various names, such as Moral faculty, Innate sense of truth, &c., some of them falsely supposing that it was a natural principle, — essentially distinct, notwithstanding, from the natural seed of corrupt human affection, — if there were not, I say, this seed, how then could any good impression be made, any ray of divine light be received, any loveliness of virtue be appreciated, any divine monition take effect, any sting of conscience be felt, any evidence of divine life be manifested, or even any distinction be discerned between good and evil ?

But, it does not follow from this view, that this seed should impart its own character to the individual possessing it, before it is developed by that power which, being of its own nature, can alone visit the soul to that effect, any more than a native talent for music, or painting, or architecture, in an infant, should give the character of any of these arts or sciences to that infant : for, in the latter case, outward circumstances and time are necessary to call this character forth. Neither does the presence of this holy seed, upon the same principle, make the possessor of it holy : because, in the first place, it is oppressed by reason of sin, though capable of being revived by grace, through the mercy of

God in Christ Jesus ; and, secondly, it is implanted for a special purpose, either to be turned to profit or to be neglected, according to the possessor's deliberate choice between good and evil. For, as in Adam the spiritual life was slain, so in Christ alone could it ever be made alive : and, if there was a good man in the world, in whom this spiritual life was manifested, between the fall of Adam and the personal appearance of Christ on earth, the life of God in such a man—and we are assured there were many—was restored by no other power than by the eternal efficacious power of the Spirit of the Redeemer of mankind. And Moses as truly saw the Lord in the bush, as Paul saw him in the way to Damascus : and Abraham saw Christ's day, as well as David, and the Evangelical Prophet : for these holy men were all baptized into the same spirit.

I shall now briefly consider the testimony borne by the apostle Paul to this doctrine : and there are three cases in the New Testament which have a reference to it, in as much as they concern, both those who were heathens, at the time he addressed them, and those who had been heathens, before he wrote to them as Christian believers. These are the cases of the men of Lystra, and the Athenians, recorded in the Acts, and that of the Romans given in the first of the Epistles.

The men of Lystra, he exhorted, to turn from their vanities unto the living God, "who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless, he *left not himself without witness*, in that he did good," &c. Acts ch. xiv.

To the Athenians, he said, "I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD, Whom,

therefore, ye ignorantly worship, Him, declare I unto you. God dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; *and hath made of one blood all nations of men*, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation: *that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.....* And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."

To the Romans, this great Apostle says, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; *because that which may be known of God, is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.* For the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; *so that they are without excuse: because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God....* Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness. *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.*"

And after this, the Apostle speaks of the rewards of obeying the truth, or obeying unrighteousness, both to the Jew and Gentile: for he declares, "*there is no respect of persons with God:* for when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things con-

trained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves ; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."

For the sake of brevity alone, I have not quoted all the words of the Apostle, in any of the three cases ; the whole are worthy of a careful examination. In considering the addresses, one after the other, it is interesting to perceive how gradually he develops the idea, which is just glanced at in the first, to its clear and full exposition in the last.

He refers them to the outward visible creation, and the bountiful supplies it affords to the whole human family, for an evidence, both of the existence of the true Invisible God, and of his universal goodness. He speaks of their alienation from, and their ignorance of, this glorious Being. He alludes, notwithstanding, to God as their common Parent, and to the common affinity of all nations "by one blood." He insists upon this Divine and Universal Parent, not having left himself without a witness, and upon his not being far from every one of them ; so that it was possible for them to seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after and find him. He declares that the divine wrath is against all unrighteousness : and that because that which may be known of God is manifest in man, God having shewed it unto him, therefore man is without excuse. He urges, that *when the Gentiles knew God*, they glorified him not as God ; and did not *like* to retain God in their knowledge ; pointing out, that some of them *had* known him, and had voluntarily forsaken him. But, he concludes, as there is no re-

spect of persons with God, the Gentiles, which do the law, not having an outward law, are a law unto themselves; because they shew the work of *the law written in their hearts*, the conscience also bearing witness, &c.

I am unable to comprehend how all the expressions, in the foregoing three cases, can be interpreted, without recognizing the principle, that the hearts of the heathen, though very dark, had something latent in them, which might be awakened to good. For, if there was a *witness* in them, if God was not far from every one of them, if that which might be known of God was manifest in them, God having shewed it unto them, and if there was a law written in their hearts, by obedience to which they were led to do the works of the law; surely, they were not, even in this dark estate, without some spark of Divine Intelligence in the soul, and therefore some degree or measure of saving light. For the Apostle winds up the matter with a most striking accusatory question, by way of appeal to the Jews, who transgressed the outward law, in favour of the Gentiles, who obeyed the law in the heart, in these words: “And shall not uncircumcision, *which is by nature, if it fulfil the law*, judge thee, who, *by the letter and circumcision*, dost transgress the law?”

At the same time, we must be sensible, that, in the nature of things, a law written in a dark place, cannot be so very legible, as that its characters should be as obvious to some, as the hand-writing of an outward law should be to others. And, as the heart, in which this divine law is supposed to be inscribed—for we cannot call it less than a divine law—is naturally full of darkness and defilement, it is a necessary conclusion, that corruption must have marred and defaced the

appearance of those *fleshly tables* in which it is written, so as to obscure the characters. Yet, it sufficiently appears, that this law written in the heart, with all these disadvantages, was still capable of being rendered clearer and clearer, in proportion to the attention practically bestowed upon it, and to the obedience manifested to its dictates,—though not, perhaps, capable of so much clearness, after all, as the gospel visitation of light after light, and grace after grace, might be expected to impart to it. And, as to the notion of its proceeding from any other fountain than that of Truth itself, or from any other source than Universal and Saving Light, shining in this darkness, “which comprehended it not,” we should gain, I think, nothing at all by such a supposition. For, whether we limit or extend the meaning of the word “Nature,” no clearer view, in my opinion, is obtained from the plausible, but, I suspect, fallacious conjecture, that the knowledge of duty, conveyed to the heathen, was from one Divine Source, and that to the Jew or Christian, from another. Because, if nature led the first to do what the Apostle speaks of, it is clear that God, in his divine mercy, was still mindful of his revolted children : for nature is his own handmaid.*

* I am aware that an objection may be made to this reasoning, to the effect, that if the word “Nature” properly represents the light of the natural reason, the argument must fall to the ground. I grant that if the whole weight of the argument rested on this word, and that it could bear no other meaning, there might be something in the objection. But it does not: for the words “a witness,” and “feeling after the Lord so as to find him,” and the declaration, “that what may be known of God is manifest in man,” are, in themselves, strong enough to support the view, that some degree of Divine Intelligence is to be presumed, and not merely the outward light of reason, or of simple nature, in the

Do not those, who deny that it is possible for man to be saved by the inward power of Christ, added to the efficacy of the propitiatory sacrifice, without the knowledge of the outward word of the gospel, either preached or written,—do not these admit, that every human being has a principle of immortal life within him, and that he is born a probationer in this world? If they admit these last positions, they are reduced to the dilemma of concluding, either that, on the contingent circumstance of having access to the outward knowledge in question, depends entirely the salvation of an immortal soul, consequently of many millions born into the world; or that the Universal Parent, who “is good to all,” and whose “tender mercies are over all his

understanding. Indeed, Parkhurst felt himself so much pressed by the force of the passage in Romans, ch. ii. 14, 15, that he takes it for “an infused disposition, which is become as it were natural,” and he applies it, “not to the Unconverted, but to Converted Gentiles.” (See Lexicon under *φύσις*.) I may remark further, that the word *φύσις* (nature) is not always applied to human nature: for it is used in 2 Peter, i. 4, in connexion with *Θείας*, for “the divine nature.” If I had time to take up the argument fully, a great deal might be urged critically against the objection.

There is good reason for thinking, that “nature,” applied to the human race, means the general or ordinary state of man in his lapsed condition, neither enlightened by the outward law of the Jews, nor by that of the gospel. Parkhurst attempts to strengthen his view that *φύσις* means an “infused disposition,” by a citation from Ignatius, in addressing the Ephesian Church: so that the word is not confined to a dark or brutish state of the understanding; but is even applied by learned men “to an infused habit which the Christian doctrine and institution hath implanted.” If it (nature) would bear such a meaning as this, it surely would bear that of “a disposition infused or implanted by the Creator.”—See *Parkhurst*.

works," and who "is no respecter of persons," and who "is not willing that any should perish;" is, nevertheless, "unequal in his ways," and partial in the administration of his moral government. And they are bound to admit a startling conclusion—the converse of that assumption—that millions, who both hear and read the outward "word," yet are not saved by these outward means. Alas! for human reason; in what darkness is it involved, when, in attempting to magnify the divine attribute of inscrutable justice, it is blind to that of infinite love and mercy!

I have remarked before, that the divine visitation to man, in the opening of the gospel dispensation, was offered to the free acceptance of all, and might, therefore, be rejected or received, according to the previous state and temper of those who were prepared or not to admit the divine influence to act freely upon them. On considering the matter, it has appeared that a little further light might be thrown upon the subject now before us, by turning our view to some of the circumstances under which our Saviour was pleased to perform many of his miracles. It was a question whether any outward evidence was afforded respecting the different states of those who received or rejected his divine help. We find, accordingly, that in proportion to the degree of FAITH which they evinced in his Divine Power, was the display of miraculous efficacy by which he healed their diseases, and, we cannot doubt, though it was an invisible work, forgave them their sins. But when faith was wanting, and the heart was hardened, there he did none or few mighty works.

Though it is quite obvious, that, in the exercise of his divine power, if he had been so pleased, he could

have imparted, in every case, this essential faith, yet it does not appear that in any instance he did so impart it. Therefore, they were received as they came to him. Some had faith in him, and some had it not; — some, in fact, were softened and prepared in their minds previously, by the operation of something good which gave them this faith. Whence then had they this faith? We know that faith is no light attainment. It is itself a divine gift. It is not a notion of the head. Its presence argues a fit state of the heart for the influence of divine love, and the operation of divine life; its absence, the contrary. How important must it have been, when the want of it so blinded the eyes of some, that “though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him!” John xii. 37.

Now, let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that the Jews who believed, received this faith in consequence of their knowledge of the law of God, and of their acquaintance with the holy scripture. Did the Roman Centurion and the Syro-Phœnician woman, who were both commended for their great faith, and who were Gentiles, receive it from the same outward source? I do not believe they did. But whether this were the case or not, as there were Jews who rejected, and Gentiles who believed, in the power of Jesus, the mere knowledge of the outward law did not constitute the difference between a believer and an unbeliever in the Messiah. There was an active principle more effectual than this outward knowledge, a deeper work necessary in the heart: and this work, I believe to have been produced by the operation of Universal and Saving Light.

Again, the apostles were reprov'd more than once,

by their divine master, for their want of faith ; and on two occasions, our Saviour, in allusion to their weak faith, used the remarkable expression, that if they had "faith as a grain of mustard seed"—the very similitude to which he compared the kingdom of God in the heart—they might say to the mountain, or to the sycamine tree, be thou removed or plucked up, &c., and they should be obeyed ; for faith might be possessed in very various degrees, between "little" and "great," and "weak" and "strong," according to the scriptures. So that it is reasonable to suppose, that the same divine universal gift in man, was the root or ground of faith, as well as of the heavenly kingdom. This view of faith will shew, that true faith is a living principle in the heart, not a speculative belief in the understanding ; and in this way does one part of holy scripture illustrate another.

In concluding this brief sketch of a doctrine which comprehends a great variety of topics, I cannot omit to notice again the testimony of the Apostle Peter, that "God is no respecter of persons ; and that in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Acts x. Neither can I omit to recall the Apostle John's testimony to the universality of Divine Light, though so often referred to, John i. 9, and as often attempted to be explained away by critical commentators, who oppose the doctrine—attempted, I say, because it stands impregnable to every attack. That of Paul to the Universality of Divine Grace, Tit. ii. 11, is no less strong, and has not escaped the arts of ingenious men to distort its simple meaning. The gospel itself, this dignified Apostle declares, he received not of men, "neither was taught

it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Gal. i. 11, 12.

I need not take up my reader's time by any critical remarks on the texts 1 Tim. iii. 16, Acts iv. 12, and Col. i. 23, further than to state, that in the first, the proper reading is — "preached (*ἐν ἔθνεσιν*) in the Gentiles;" in the second, "name under heaven given (*ἐν ἀνθρώποις*) in men (not among men), whereby we must be saved;" and in the third, "the gospel.....preached (*ἐν πάσῃ κτίσει*) in (not to) every creature under heaven." I may take the liberty to refer my younger readers to what Cruden says under the word "Gospel," *before* he speaks of it as the "historical narration of what Christ did," &c. — as to its fuller and more spiritual acceptance, as the text, Gal. iii. 8, justifies.

Perhaps little stress ought to be laid upon the testimony of many of the Heathens themselves, to something, being in them, better than their own carnal affections, and better even than the faculty of discursive reason. Yet this, weak as it may appear to some, should be added to the foregoing arguments. A host of ancient philosophers, uninstructed by Holy Writ, and simply by the light of truth in their own minds, which broke in a small degree through the surrounding obscurity, seem to have had views of moral perfection and a virtuous life, which they might have wished, but had no natural ability, to realize in this world. And, in reading some of their lucubrations, we may perceive them struggling, with vain but laudable efforts of speculative inquiry, to pierce the veil which was placed before their minds outwardly; while they were, in their hearts, claiming kindred with a holier race, and reaching forward to a higher hope, and panting after

a connexion with a better state, than this earth, with all its honours, and enjoyments, and flattering prospects, could afford them.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

On looking over the "Beacon" again, since the preceding pages were written, its tendency appears to me very decided; and whether the author designed, or not, that it should have that tendency, it is not for me to judge: but I will frankly own what I believe it to be: and as all men are liable to be mistaken, I also may be mistaken.

There are two classes of Christian professors; those who make their religion a work of the heart, and those who make it a work of the head. Now, I am far from thinking that either the writer of the "Beacon," or many of those who may be led to approve of his work, may deserve to be classed wholly with the latter; yet, I am well assured that all those members of the "Society" who are despising their ancient testimonies, from whatever cause, and are looking outward in their religious views, will be the most likely to receive it; and on the other hand, that all who are endeavouring, by an honest, heart-felt inquiry, to keep and to attain to a quiet resting place, as on the bosom of the "Beloved of their souls," in meekness, and humility, and the fear of God, and in secret waiting, and earnest supplication to him for divine help, will find many of

the positions laid down in the "Beacon," unsatisfactory, and the effect of them confusing, and unsettling to their minds. I am answerable for this opinion to Him who seeth the heart; and therefore, I state it reverently. For, either our religion is a spiritual religion, or it is not. If it be a spiritual religion, as every thing, connected with our mode of worship, our ministry, and our discipline, evinces, we cannot place our dependence, that is, exclusively, on any thing but spiritual government; or, such a submission to the government of the Invisible Head of the church, through the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit in our minds—for he is Lord of all—as we are taught in scripture to believe, is the only *life*, and *support*, and *strength*, of every Christian believer. And, whether the impulse to good be given by the ministry, or by the Scripture, or by the renewed visitation of divine grace immediately conveyed, *it is in the heart only* that this impulse, either to repentance or conversion, can be received availingly, and saving grace be applied for our help. So that, we would not dispute with any about the *means*, provided *the ultimate standard*—the quickening virtue of Christ's Spirit in the soul—be allowed as the indispensable operation, in commencing, carrying forward, and maturing, the spiritual life, which is within us, if we deserve the name of Christians. This ultimate standard—the revelation of the will of God in the heart—is what the Society of Friends, if I know their doctrines, adhere to, as a vital principle of faith: and upon the ground of principle they can set nothing above it.

I have come to the conclusion above stated, upon the principle, that the author of the "Beacon" does

not seem to be consistent with his own views, and upon the conviction, that it would be impossible to carry out such views into a practicable system. There is not enough of "Quakerism" in them, to subsist alone, and there is too near an approach to others, to allow that little to be retained. For, various modifications of opinion, now seen to be incompatible with our principles, would soon come to be entertained; so that, not even the shadow of "Quakerism" would remain.

The tendency, therefore, of the "Beacon" appears to my view very decided. For, the simplicity of silent worship, the offence of the cross in the peculiarities we maintain, and the humble offerings of many truly baptized ministers in our assemblies, made in brokenness and fear, and without "the enticing words of man's wisdom," must needs be revolting to the advocates of any other doctrines than those of pure "Quakerism." Are we to be told, that the true gospel minister is to have his divine commission sealed, entirely by the powerful effect upon his audience, with which his ministry is accompanied? Then, Paul, notwithstanding his preaching must have had the demonstration and power of the Spirit, would not have been "mocked," and called a "babbler," by the wise Athenians. But, to sit in our solemn assemblies, in a state of humiliation, for the sake of our brethren, whether they be in suffering or in weakness, and for the sake of the burden of our testimonies, which are heavy on the shoulders of the burden-bearers, though a state perhaps of profit to individuals, is one that few would desire, and many would wish to avoid: yet, if there be any truth in the doctrine, that, in Christ's mystical body, the church, when one member suffers,

the rest suffer with it, this humiliation, and this suffering, must be patiently endured. Lamentation, excited by sympathy, and a wish to relieve what is oppressed, is amiable, and it is christian : lamentation, caused by a general dissatisfaction, and an unwillingness to lift a finger to ease a burden, is neither profitable to the mourner, nor to the body afflicted: the right way to act is to come forward with our assistance; and this is the duty of every member.

Let us now consider, what is the position of our small section of the Christian church, at the present time. If we look at the weakness of human nature, it is hardly to be expected, even in a Christian society, that all things should proceed, in the unity of the Spirit, as if there was only one heart and one mind. There is too much of a leaning to the world, in every Society, to permit the eye to be single: so that, weakness, in a greater, or in a lesser degree, must be the consequence.

Now, this position being taken for granted, let us ask, is the Society of Friends weak in its doctrines, as well as in its support of them; or is it only weak in the support, while it is strong in the testimonies? The Society is small; and, perhaps, in one point of view, some may regard it as a weak body—weak, from two causes, in proportion to its numbers. Have we not amongst us those, who, through lukewarmness, stand as it were aloof, and, like Gallio, care little about the testimonies given us to bear; and also those—I trust, however, few—who are doing their endeavours to prostrate some of these noble testimonies to the ground? If this be the case, we can expect no aid from the first; and the last must be looked upon as an enemy

in the camp, who, having no inclination to put off the *name* by which we are called, are not in principle with us, and even desire that we should erect a new standard.

This, if a true picture, is in itself a ground of sorrow, and, it may be, of some discouragement: but, on the other hand, if we are persuaded that the foundation is sure—and after the “Society” has endured such a warfare, that it might fix its habitation upon it, where is the good reason to doubt?—as an individual, I have faith to believe that this foundation will never be abandoned, and that many will still be found to defend every testimony we uphold. Hence, there is a strong ground of hope, as well as of animating encouragement. For the testimonies of “the Society” never were, I believe, more valuable than they are at the present day. There is not one of them that has not true wisdom and Christian principle to support it. What our forefathers were led to support on principle, when power and policy were against them, we now find many are supporting even on the ground of human policy. What a glorious triumph to the cause of Christian principle, if it were lawful for a Christian to boast! That a poor, despised sect, exposed to the scorn and mockery of others, should, after so many generations, be permitted to see that their testimonies against oaths, and war, and slavery, and some other things it might be invidious to name, taken up originally, it was thought, in blind zeal, are now discovered by others to be grounded on an enlightened as well as a Christian policy!

The argument, indeed, is often used, that others are coming nearer to ourselves both in principle and prac-

tice; and that it is sectarian, and narrow-minded, and illiberal, to maintain our peculiarities; as though we affected a greater sanctity by these peculiarities, and wished it to appear that we were so much better than our neighbours. Hence, pride, and hypocrisy, and a superstitious reliance on dress and address, as the main stay of our religion, have been, and continue to be, neither sparingly, nor charitably, imputed to us, by many, who little know the cross and the self-denial we undergo, and the real light in which we view these outward appendages of the Christian character,—which may perhaps be considered but as the tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, compared to the fulfilment of the weightier matters of the law.

It is cause of joy and thanksgiving that others are coming nearer to us, whether in their principles or in their practice: but, that others are making advances to us, is no good reason why we should make advances to them; nor can it be any ground at all that we should move one single step from any of our testimonies, to meet our fellow Christians of other denominations; for whom, at the same time, we feel both charity and goodwill. Because we believe that the standard we have adopted is a *fixed* one, and that as it is, we apprehend, not of our own, but of divine appointment, therefore we cannot change it. Some of us believe further, that others, in time, will see it in the same light that we do; and therefore, instead of letting it down, we have an additional reason to uphold it. This rule applies to every testimony we profess. Even now, many approve some of our testimonies, and the excellence of parts of our discipline, who are not yet willing to adopt them. This is the

triumph of truth: and truth will at last have the victory; if not by means of the Society of Friends, by means of another which shall maintain its principles.

The Society of Friends, therefore, weak as it may appear, and weak as it really is,—in as much as many of its members, in every station, do not live so godly a life as they ought, or in a manner conformably to the principles they profess—and this is not because they uphold such testimonies, but because they do not live up to them—yet it has noble and precious testimonies laid upon it to bear; and when we reflect how few they are, in proportion to its numbers, upon whom the weight of these testimonies commonly rests, the wonder is, that it is enabled to maintain them so firmly and uprightly as it does: for the attraction from without is as great, perhaps, as ever it was. The nearer approach of others makes the difference appear less; and those who are bound by a loose tie, are more easily induced to step over a boundary, which appears to them too trivial to separate them from a more agreeable and open path.

For, if we come to the causes of this easy defection from the practice, which is enjoined by principles like those of the “Society,” it is not difficult to perceive, that so narrow a path must be uncongenial to the natural will and the buoyant expectations of youth.

It is a hard thing to live in the world, and yet aloof from the world; to have the mind stored with knowledge, and yet to be humble with the attainment; to be able to command the comforts and the luxuries of life, without being engrossed or overcome by them; to possess riches, without the pride and ambition they

are too apt to engender ; to profess a religion, which, on account of its peculiarities, exposes the members to a degree of scorn and contempt, without a natural desire to escape derision, and to take shelter in some other name. It is hard, in fact, to be meek, and humble, and self-abased, when knowledge, and wealth, and outward prosperity, and an abundance of the good things of life, are carrying the mind away from the simplicity and purity of the true Christian character. But it is still more hard, in this state, to conform to a mode of worship which essentially requires an inward, not an outward, direction of thought—in other words—a spiritual, not a carnal, view of things.

There is surely enough, therefore, in the world, to draw the eye of the mind outward, as in business, pleasure, occupation, and study, whether in literature or science, without making every part of our religion also—and this the spiritual religion of Christ—to assume an outward character. It was formerly a point of wisdom, under a far inferior dispensation, for a man *to know himself*, and to be acquainted with his own heart. But now, we are to understand, that *to commune with our own hearts and be still*, is an affectation of high spirituality, and a pretension to something, either that we cannot obtain, or, having obtained, that will delude the mind ! For if, in order to change the heart, and to make it a fit temple for God to dwell in, we must hear and read perpetually, is not this to turn the mind outward in religion ? I wish to state this matter with simplicity, not with any irreverence. Surely, if we were to hear the preaching of an angel from heaven, and to read in the divine oracles every hour of the day, something would still be wanting in

ourselves, unless we are to be accounted as machines that are actuated by an influence, against our will, or deliberate choice, and even without our consciousness. For we must admit, that neither words nor ideas are in themselves spiritual things, which change our minds to their own nature, as the natural food we take is changed to our animal nature, or as a few drops of some chemical composition change a fluid to its own nature. The food is assimilated and converted to our own substance, unless there be an antipathy to it; and it is so with the food of the mind. If the mind be not in a fit state to receive heavenly food, it will go no farther than the eye and the ear, which are the channels of outward communication; and there will, then, be no addition of spiritual substance to spiritual substance. And, even if the mind be prepared to receive good impressions in this way, by hearing and reading what is good, there must be time for spiritual digestion,—time for sober meditation,—time for silent and reverent thoughtfulness; to convert that which is received to our own use and profit.

It is more easy to see and hear, than to think: as the mind becomes ennobled from the state of the savage to that of the sage, the exercise of the senses gradually gives place to the exercise of intellect. If this be the case with regard to the understanding, as it relates to secular matters, ought it not to be much more the case with regard to a spiritual dispensation, which, theoretically at least, abrogated every specious rite and ceremony in religious worship!

Now, let us consider the easy work, which, in a general way, the professors of Christianity make of the arduous duty of following the narrow way of the cross,

in order to spare themselves the trouble of this more irksome and laborious introversion of the mind. Is not public worship, in almost every part of it, and in almost every Christian society, calculated to engage the outward senses, either in seeing or in hearing? I put the question, in order that some may reflect, whether, if in our religious exercises, as well as in every thing else we do, the direction of the mind is naturally turned outward, we are taking the right view, in laying it down as a principle, that all our religious duties as Christians, ought to consist in such outward observances as, coinciding with the tendency of other things, keep the mind from looking into its own state—in fact, from meeting the great Searcher of hearts, and Discerner of spirits, in his own temple, there to be interrogated and judged, or to be raised up and comforted! But, how the mind is to see its own state spiritually, without the “single eye,” I am unable, upon any Christian principle, to discover.

While I believe that the practice of meeting together in solemn silence, to worship HIM who is a spirit, is highly profitable, I often feel for those whose eyes are not satisfied, except with seeing, nor their ears, except with hearing; and as no man, in a religious sense, can do his brother's work, but must attend to his own, I think of the beautiful figurative expressions, of *every man sitting under his own fig-tree, and labouring in his own vineyard, and having water in his own cistern*; analogous to those, of every individual of the flock, feeding in green pastures, by the still waters of life!

I dare not undervalue a living and a powerful gospel ministry; but I have lived long enough to be convinced of the sacred truth, that neither the wisdom, nor the

eloquence of man, is the power of God : and, while I conscientiously believe that the highest soaring of human imagination, combined with the most powerful oratory, devoted to sacred things in the mere will of man, cannot give the Spirit, nor work any inward change beyond the entrance of the "itching ear," I also believe, that the gospel is often truly and effectually preached, in the few and savoury words of the contrite minister, who is almost afraid to open his lips in the name of the Lord.

Seeing that things are so—that there is so much to engage the senses, even in the observances of the spiritual religion of Christ—I own that I am alarmed at the prospect of any further encouragement being given to the members of our own Society especially, to place still more dependence on external things, even though the best possible outward helps and appendages of our religion ; because the danger is, that the mind, being thus drawn from a view of its real state, will at last become entirely absorbed in these externals ; as, there is reason to fear, is too much the case with many under the Christian name. I am not insensible to the importance, and the duty, of serious daily meditation upon the truths contained in the Sacred Volume. But we must remember that the *means* of religion are not the *end*.

In connexion with the preceding view, I am led to notice a form of expression used in the "Beacon," relative to the Holy Scriptures, which indicates, I think, the author's religious sentiments very clearly, though he qualifies it afterwards. He speaks of "the teaching of the Holy Spirit by the Scriptures." (p. 29.) Now, we know that the Holy Spirit can open the

Scriptures, and that, without its aid, they are "a sealed book." Therefore, if the expression had been reversed, viz., *the teaching of the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit*, it would have come nearer to the view of the "Society," and indeed to that view expressed in another place (p. 77), where it is said, the humble Christian "reverently acknowledges that it is by the Holy Spirit his understanding is opened, and the sacred truths of the Bible are savingly applied to his heart." And here, I cannot but make a general remark, that, while I trust and believe that the Holy Scriptures will never cease to be regarded by the Society of Friends as one of the greatest outward helps and blessings to aid the Christian in his course, which, by the goodness of Providence, we possess, and which, indeed, have been acknowledged as such by the "Society," in its "Advices," and by its practice, uniformly down to the present time; nevertheless, though it does not become me to judge my neighbour, neither am I competent to say how far the "searching of the Scriptures," without any other help, might make a Christian of another denomination, I am well persuaded that something in addition to searching the Scriptures is necessary to make a *true Quaker*.

I have before spoken of "The Constitution of the Society of Friends;" and, in looking at the manner in which its doctrines appear to me to be interwoven with this Constitution, so as to support each other, I am led to conclude that if the doctrines be changed, the Constitution must be changed likewise. By this remark, I mean to imply, that if the doctrine of Immediate Revelation be surrendered, the system of the "Society" must be broken up. Therefore, I feel some surprise,

that any one should expect, that a Christian Society, similar to that of "Friends," either in its spirit or in its letter, with any fixed principles of inherent vigour in itself, could be organized upon the destruction of this vital doctrine.

For, if we look at the economy of our system, in every part, we must perceive that it is maintained, and that it depends essentially, upon the principle of Immediate Revelation. Quakerism, if I may use the term, is held together, *practically*, by the doctrine of the Immediate Revelation of the Divine will, by the inshining of the light of Christ, and the blessed influence of the Holy Spirit, in the soul of man. But, Quakerism is a word too limited to comprehend what, we are persuaded, belongs to Christianity itself, in its purest form and its broadest acceptance. No true "Quaker" would arrogate to the "Society" an exclusive belief in that most holy and evangelical principle.

I say, that our system is not merely *theoretically* established, but that it stands, *practically*, upon this ground. For, the practice of silent worship, without the implied necessity, either of a priest to minister, or of any words, even of holy writ, to be spoken in our ears; the mode in which a gospel minister is acknowledged, and the manner in which the gift itself is exercised, *after* he is so acknowledged; the renunciation of outward rites, as well as of the necessary intervention of any one privileged class, to consecrate, either by their presence or their offices, any of our *solemnities*; the rejection of the doctrine, that a superior degree of sanctity belongs essentially to the ministerial class, to which every other class may not

attain; the testimony in favour of a pure unbought gospel ministry, and against the ordinations and appointments of men; the recognition in our meetings of discipline, of the very peculiar principle,—held, I believe, by no other society of professing Christians—that we need no outward President or Moderator, because we believe the Great and Holy President of our Assemblies to be Christ himself; the order and the harmony that are generally observed, under these peculiar circumstances:—all these things shew that the practice and the theory of the Society are in unison; and that, with every allowance which we are bound to make for errors in the practice, owing to the weakness of human nature, the soundness of the theory has hitherto prevented the irregularities, whatever these may be, to which the practice is exposed, from amounting to so great and so serious a number as might perhaps have been otherwise expected.

The sum and substance of our principles is, that independently of a conformity to those rules of outward order, which are indispensable to bind together every Christian community, scarcely a step can be taken in the usual and regular proceedings of the Society, that does not recognize the fundamental principle of immediate revelation.

The question is now, therefore, prominently before the Christian world, whether the great truths—for such they are deemed by the “Society” to be—which are involved in the several peculiarities just noticed, belong to a pure and unadulterated Christianity, and for that reason ought to be supported; or, whether they are all to be pusillanimously abandoned, and a lower standard to be chosen. Surely, the advocates

for a pure Christian faith and practice, and the true friends of the Society, cannot hesitate a moment in their decision of this question. The immediate interests and views of any particular sect, are of little importance, compared with the universal abandonment, or the firm support, by the great body of professing Christians, of what is conceived to be a cardinal principle of Christian faith.

In concluding my observations on the character of the "Beacon," and on the religious sentiments professed, or rather *implicated*, in it, I feel at liberty to state, that there is always a difficulty in maintaining an argument when both sides are not agreed on the precise meaning of the terms they employ. And, as I perceive that the author of the "Beacon" uses some Scripture terms in a sense different from that in which I view them, I am precluded from meeting him on several points in this my "Defence," if I were so disposed, without some preliminaries being settled. It is not, therefore, because I wish to take any advantage of the author, but because I wish to know his real principles, that I have selected the following passages from the work, and placed them in juxta-position with each other; conceiving that, in this way, the author will best explain himself, and shew the bearing of his own religious principles. And as I cannot take upon myself to deny all his inferences, for the reason above stated; it will be for others to judge, whether I am borne out in my opinion, that the author does not seem to be consistent with himself.*

It might, indeed, naturally be urged, that if I have taken up a wrong impression with regard to the au-

* See Appendix—Extracts from the "Beacon," page 98.

thor's religious views, a great deal of unnecessary labour might have been spared, in the exposition which I have attempted to give of two important doctrines. I acknowledge, that if I had not seen in the arguments of those who opposed some of our early Friends, on the points in question, nearly the same objections urged that are to be found in the comments by the author of the "Beacon," I should have been induced to hesitate, and to question the grounds of defence I had taken. But it so happens that nearly the same objections were made in the early rise of the "Society," and in expressions not very dissimilar.

The writings of Samuel Fisher and of Richard Claridge afford proof of this: These were learned men, clergymen of the Established Church, each of them educated at an English University, and each made a sacrifice of a valuable living in the Church for conscience sake; the one of Lydd in Kent, the other of Peopleton in Worcestershire. Samuel Fisher died "a prisoner for the testimony of Jesus," so early as the year 1665: and in his treatise called "*Rusticus ad Academicos*, or the Rustic's alarm to the Rabbies," he enters fully and clearly into all the objections made to the doctrine of Universal and Saving Light. William Penn speaks highly of him, as "a conscientious, fair, and learned apologist;" and states, that "in perusing his *Rusticus ad Academicos*, he found the objections of several considerable opposers so closely handled, and so plainly enervated, that his (W. P.'s) heart was not more affected than his understanding was clearly satisfied of the truth and reasonableness of those principles he (S. F.) defended."*

* William Penn's Testimony concerning S. Fisher.

Richard Claridge had held his Rectory for about twenty years, but he was led to resign it, that he might preserve the testimony of a good conscience, and he afterwards followed the occupation of a school-master. The debate which he held in Latin with a learned Hungarian, as it is given in his Life and Works, proves that he was not unskilled in the expert use of his weapons, as a Christian logician, to defend the principles he had adopted. It must, surely, be considered a very remarkable circumstance in the History of the Society, that the warm opponents of these firm and upright champions, who hazarded their fortunes and their lives, for the sake, and in defence, of the UNCHANGEABLE TRUTH as it is in Jesus, should have employed arguments nearly similar to those brought forward, 'in this day, by one in the station of a minister in the "Society"! Hence, the support of the religious doctrines of the Society, does not rest entirely upon the Apology of Robert Barclay, nor on the writings of William Penn—and these were bright and eminent in their day—but upon the testimony of many other learned men, who were well approved and esteemed by their friends. It would have gratified me to add some powerful corroborating testimonies from such men, as well as from the writings of George Fox, but I was anxious that my "Defence" of the doctrines of Immediate Revelation and of Universal and Saving Light—feeble as I acknowledge it to be—should rest entirely on the authority of Holy Scripture. There will not be wanting many to supply my omissions. And, if, in the haste with which these pages have been written, I have been betrayed into any expression, either disrespectful to the individual, whose work I have exa-

mined, or unbecoming the advocacy of Christian truth, I shall be as ready to ask his excuse, as to condemn my own apparent want of brotherly kindness. Looking at the principle alone — a great and holy principle as I conceive it to be — which is now at stake, I have not scrupled to declare my own honest convictions, with regard to the several points which I have handled, feeling that the censure of man is of no account when placed in the balance with an approving conscience. Many things in relation to the subject, are still before my mind, and I must be content to bear that reproach which I anticipate, for what I have *omitted*, as well as for what I have *said*. On the subjects of Prayer and Faith I have scarcely touched; though they are important in the present day; and, I believe, the views of the Society of Friends in relation to the former to be much misapprehended. There is, however, some consolation in thinking, that in the present liberal and enlightened age, we can all advocate what we believe to be the cause of truth, without that semblance of uncharitableness and asperity which appeared formerly to be assumed, by men of all denominations, as the necessary accompaniments of an upright Christian zeal. When men believe that they are contending for *one object*, and that object the EVERLASTING TRUTH, they ought to feel the charities of the Gospel to influence their hearts towards each other, and to act upon the Apostolic declaration, that “The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.”

I hope to be excused for a critical remark upon the note in the "Beacon," page 46.

"*Rhema* comes from *rheo*, to speak, and, according to the best authorities, is never applied to Christ, but means saying, command, discourse: therefore, where this term occurs, the sense is fixed, as in the passage Rom. x. 17, and also Eph. vi. 17; "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

I have a very short remark to make on this assertion, that *rhema* only means saying, command, &c. The passage in Heb. xi. 3, "the worlds were framed BY THE WORD OF GOD," contains the words *ρηματι θεου* (*rhemati theou*). By whom, I would ask, were all things created? If we answer in the language of Scripture: "God created all things BY JESUS CHRIST." Eph. iii. 9. Is He not then the *Rhema Theou*, and is it not *here* applied to Christ?

Hence the author's inference grounded on Eph. vi. 17, that the "Sword of the Spirit," is the "*Declaratory word*," must fall to the ground.

APPENDIX.

EXTRACTS FROM THE "BEACON."

"There can be no higher rule than the scriptures," (page 9.) "A written revelation of his will, which we are bound to receive as the gracious message of God to us, *to teach us the mind of the Spirit.*" (page 11.)

The Gospel "appears always to be used with especial reference to those good tidings." (page 129.) "For our Lord Jesus Christ compares the Gospel to seed sown by the sower, that is, the preacher." (page 130.) "*The law of the spirit of life* in Christ Jesus, is evidently an expression which the apostle uses to designate THE GOSPEL." (page 135.) "Is not THE PREACHING OF THE WORD, or GOSPEL, a very principal means appointed by God, for the salvation of man?" (page 41.) "Christ and the Spirit testify to the efficacy of the DECLARATORY WORD, whether called the truth, the word of truth, the gospel, the law of God, or the word of God; and which is revealed to us by the Spirit through the scriptures." (page 52.) See texts, Mark iv. 14, Luke viii. 11, Eph. vi. 17, Heb. iv. 12. "If we unhappily flatter ourselves that we have the knowledge of the will of God, *independently of the written revelation* by which it has pleased him to convey it, we lay ourselves open to the delusion of the devil." (page 45.)

"'The true source of instruction' to the Apostles was immediate, except as regards the Old Testament."

(page 147.) "But to us it is mediate." (page 148.)
"Nevertheless, it is by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, that we are disposed to receive that instruction." (page 148.) "It is indeed by the power of the Holy Spirit that the heart is softened and opened to receive the truth." (page 46.)
"But through the instrumentality of man, both in preaching the gospel, and spreading HIS written revelation, the HOLY SPIRIT is still pleased to work, for the conversion of kingdoms, and nations, and tongues, and people." (page 84.)

"No such doctrine was here intended, as that 'a portion of the Spirit is given to every rational creature.'" (page 119.) "The deistical notion, furnished by Satan, from the perversion of scriptural truth (and therefore the more subtle and dangerous), that all men in the world, believers and unbelievers, are in possession of a PRINCIPLE independent of the gospel, sufficient for them to secure the favour of God, and eternal life!" (page 121.)

"The way by which the law becomes written on the heart, is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." (page 92.) "It is by the operation of the HOLY SPIRIT upon the heart that we are induced to believe in Christ." (page 92.) "To believe on the Son of God is necessary, before we can have the witness (or evidence) in ourselves." (page 137.) "The INDWELLING of the spirit is consequent upon the believing in Christ." (page 152.) "It is only by the influence and power of the HOLY SPIRIT, that the enmity is done away, and inclination for the light and truth of revelation is produced." (page 143.) "'The name of Jesus is nothing but the power,'" &c. This assertion is wholly unwar-

ranted, and is made to support the dangerous error, that the inward light is the primary rule of faith and practice." (page 109.)

"Did the apostle tell the Corinthians they must come to a revelation in their own hearts? Did he direct the people to a light within themselves?" &c.— "Nothing like it." (page 111.) "What reason has any man to suppose, that order established by a body of people, can keep them together *acceptably to God*, unless the bond of their union consists in the acknowledgment of the holy scriptures — the attested revelation of the SPIRIT, as the rule of their faith and practice?" (page 111.)

"The assertion 'that he is *only* known and found in the still small voice' is wholly unsupported by scripture. And we know not by what authority it is said 'that what is to be known of God is manifested *only* in man.'" (page 86.)

"The *prophecy* of Jeremiah xxxi. 27—40, affords no ground for the hypothesis which has been built upon it, viz. that under the gospel dispensation the law is written on the heart of EVERY MAN." (page 91.)

"The way by which the law comes to be written on the heart, is by faith in the Lord Jesus." (page 92.)

"To imagine silence and stillness are essential to true worship would be a great error." (page 96.)

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